SCRUTINY

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WITH AN INDEX AND
RETROSPECT

VOLUME I
1932–33

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SCRUTINY

A Quarterly Review

I

1932–33

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SCRUTINY

A Quarterly Review

Edited by
L. C. KNIGHTS and DONALD CULVER.

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SCRUTINY: A MANIFESTO

THE first number of a review is not, of course, an ideal place in which to discuss the best Method of Conducting a Critical Journal. To do so provides openings for irony, and caution would suggest that we creep into print meekly. But such a course is impossible; the age is illiterate with periodicals and no ordinary reasons will excuse an addition to the swarm. Policy, as well as honesty, demands that if we imagine ourselves to have a valid reason for existence, we should state it.

The general dissolution of standards is a commonplace. Many profess to believe (though fewer seem to care) that the end of Western civilization is in sight. But perhaps even the Spenglerian formula, in its deterministic nonchalance, represents an emotional as much as an intellectual reaction; and if optimism is naïve, fatalism is not necessarily an intelligent attitude. Intelligence has an active function.

Those who are aware of the situation will be concerned to cultivate awareness, and will be actively concerned for standards. A review is necessary that combines criticism of literature with criticism of extra-literary activities. We take it as axiomatic that concern for standards of living implies concern for standards in the arts.

At this point we remind ourselves of the recent history of critical journalism. In England during the last two decades no serious critical journal has been able to survive in the form in which it was conceived; and how many have been able to survive in any form? *The Calendar of Letters,* which deserved the whole-hearted support of the educated, lasted less than three years. And more recently the *Nation,* itself the grave of the *Athenæum,* has suffered a euphemistic extinction. There are survivors, but they have for the most part steadily lowered their level of appeal. There is no need to describe the more blatant signs—gossiping essays, inferior criticism, competitions and crossword puzzles. In America there is the *Hound and Horn, The Symposium,* and the *New*

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Republic, all of which remind us that America is not inhabited solely by Babbitts. The *New Republic* in particular combines literary criticism with sensitive attention to modern affairs. But these papers have no English counterparts, and the ordinary man receives far less help from the better-class journals and the critics than, in a civilized community, he has a right to expect.[1]

* * *

The reader will have gathered by now that *Scrutiny* is not to be a purely literary review. But what exactly, he may wonder, is meant by that hint of a generous interest in ' modern affairs ' at large? There are politics, for instance. Well, a devotion to them at the party level, is, no doubt, somewhere necessary. But something else is necessary—and prior: a play of the free intelligence upon the underlying issues. This is to desiderate a cultivated historical sense, a familiarity with the ' anthropological ' approach to contemporary civilization exemplified by *Middletown,* and a catholic apprehension of the humane values. When we say that the political ambition of *Scrutiny* is indicated here, we incur criticism from two sides: to the effect that our ambition is amusing, and that we are too remote from practice to interest anyone really alive to the plight of the world. As for the former criticism, a glance round at current journalism suggests that at any rate to be too ambitious will be something of a novel fault. As for the latter, the impotence of the practical mind to do anything essential in practice is being so thoroughly demonstrated that the retort needs no pressing.

Scrutiny, then, will be seriously preoccupied with the movement of modern civilization. And if we add that it will direct itself especially upon educational matters the reader will realize

[1]There is of course *The Criterion,* of which it is difficult to speak without respect. It is still the most serious as it is the most intelligent of our journals. But its high price, a certain tendency to substitute solemnity for seriousness, and, during the last two years, a narrowing of its interests, prevent it from influencing more than a small proportion of the reading public. It is necessary, but not the *unum necessarium.*

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that there may, after all, be a fairly close approach to practice.

* * *

Where literary criticism is concerned we can be immediately practical and political. The first duty is to publish good criticism judiciously directed. And inseparable from this is a conscious critical policy, if anything is to be effected in the present state of culture. For to-day there are anti-highbrow publics and 'modernist' publics, but there is no public of Common Readers with whom the critic can rejoice to concur. He cannot leave his standards to look after themselves. When Mr. Eliot's *Ash-Wednesday* appeared it received one intelligent review, in an American paper.[1] Mr. Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* apparently caused nothing but bewilderment in the minds of nearly all its reviewers. On the other hand *Jew Süss* received a noisy welcome in the Press ('Everybody who respects himself has read it' said Mr. Arnold Bennett); and *Dusty Answer* was said to 'reveal new possibilities for literature.' There is no need to multiply examples. They can be found in almost any number of the *Times Literary Supplement* (where at one time it was possible to find criticism), in the columns of the Sunday papers and elsewhere.

And when criticism defaults the loss is not merely the reader's. Of late years important works of art have appeared, serious books of criticism have been written, but their reception has been such as to discourage further production on the part of their creators, if not to make creation impossible; for in spite of the romantic conception of the poet as a bird (preferably a skylark) singing to please himself in glorious isolation, the artist does depend in large measure on the prevailing standard of taste. On occasions he may be able to ignore his age and its demands, but in the past the relation between artist and patron (the person or persons for whom he writes, builds, carves, etc.) has been of great importance in determining the use of talent. There is no reason to suppose that it will be otherwise in the future.

* * *

It goes without saying that for the majority neither the present

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[1]By Allen Tate in the *Hound and Horn*.

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drift of civilization nor the plight of the arts is a matter for much concern. It is true there are many who are interested in one or the other without seeing any connexion between them; but it is only a small minority for whom the arts are something more than a luxury product, who believe, in fact, that they are ' the store-house of recorded values ' and, in consequence, that there is a necessary relationship between the quality of the individual's response to art and his general fitness for a humane existence. The trouble is not that such persons form a minority, but that they are scattered and unorganised. Every year, for instance, intelligent young men and women go down from the Universities and are swallowed by secondary and public schools. Their interests wilt in the atmosphere of the school common room, and isolation makes their efforts to keep themselves informed of ' the best that is known and thought in the world ' unnecessarily depressing and difficult. Others besides schoolmasters are in the same position. *Scrutiny* has been founded on the assumption that a magazine in which such men and women can exchange and refine their ideas, and which provides a focus of intellectual interests, will perform a service attempted by no other paper.

* * *

It would perhaps be wisest not to define the programme of *Scrutiny* too narrowly until intentions can be judged by performance. But if the case which we have outlined above is to be something more than a gesture of dissatisfaction, it is necessary that we should at least indicate the policy which we intend to follow.

Scrutiny will print critical articles on literature and the arts and on various significant aspects of contemporary life. In both these departments of criticism, analysis and interpretation will be with a view to judgment—from a standpoint which will have been made clear when one or two numbers have been published.

Besides essays in literary criticism, a few carefully selected books will be reviewed each quarter, of the sort that is so frequently passed over by the newspaper supplements and the monthly magazines, or inadequately treated. Occasionally there will be reviews of books which have appeared in the past and which have suffered an unjust disregard; and it may seem profitable to analyse certain popular successes. In each case consistent standards of criticism will be applied.

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A pervasive interest of the magazine will find expression in disinterested surveys of some departments of modern life in an attempt to increase understanding of the way in which civilization is developing. In the collection of material it is hoped to secure the co-operation of readers who are in a favourable position for observation.

Related to this kind of analysis are the articles which we have planned on various aspects of education—the teaching of English in schools and universities, the training of teachers, and similar subjects. Traditional methods of education are being subjected at present to fairly rigorous criticism and a certain amount of overhauling; criticism which sees educational problems as part of the larger problem of general culture is, however, still necessary. To say that the life of a country is determined by its educational ideals is a commonplace; but it is a commonplace that is passively accepted more often than it is acted upon.

Scrutiny will also publish original compositions. Since, however, more people are able to write good criticism than good verse or short stories, we commit ourselves to no large or constant proportion of creative work.

In conclusion, we wish to make it clear that active co-operation from readers is invited. All contributions will be carefully considered, in order to make current the best of that kind of criticism which is now so often confined to isolated groups and private discussion. We have long been told that *les clercs* have betrayed their function. It would be more true to say that their voice cannot be heard above the confused noises made by the self-appointed sponsors of civilization. We do not know how long this will be so. Meanwhile the attempt is worth making to provide a focus of ideas and a centre of resistance for those who accept the case presented in this manifesto.

* * *

We have a critical policy. This does not mean that all articles printed in *Scrutiny* will be identical in outlook. In particular, the points of view of articles with immediate practical bearings may differ considerably from each other, and they will not necessarily coincide with editorial opinion. For instance, the reader need not draw from the essay on Public Schools any conclusions regarding our own attitude to them. We shall publish articles which—whether

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we agree with them entirely or not—are of intrinsic importance, which help to clear up current confusions and suggest a new approach to standards.

* * *

In the choice of paper, type and general format the editors have attempted to combine a minimum of expense with a maximum of reading matter. It remains for those who think that a review such as this is worth their support to guarantee their subscriptions to the editors, and (in place of the usual advertising, which we cannot afford) to make it known to others who may be interested.

A subscription form will be found inside the back cover.

No payment is made for contributions.

All communications should be addressed to: The Editors, 13, Leys Road, Cambridge, England.

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A NOTE ON NOSTALGIA

ALL one can gather from the present day use of the word ' nostalgia ' in criticism is that it confers on the user a kind of aloof superiority. 'Somewhat nostalgic,' says J. B. Trend of an article he reviewed in *The Criterion* last January, and a few pages further on another critic brings the same charge against Middleton Murry. E. Miller, the psycho-pathologist, makes a most sweeping generalisation on the relation between nostalgia and some forms of art: ' In so far as poetry in its lyrical manifestation is the nostalgic cry of the mind expressing its attitude towards nature, experience, and the inner self, it is *par excellence* the voice of the schizothymic temperament. . . This nostalgic background of all lyric art. . . ' [*Types of Mind and Body*, p. 100]. The word invariably conveys the same tone of slightly pitying disparagement, but what it implies beyond this vague attitude of the critic is seldom clear. Generally, of course, it is no more than a conveniently non-committal derogatory label. But even when the theme is developed a little no very precise meaning appears, although the potency of the word becomes impressive. Waldo Frank shows what can be done with it: ' The nostalgia of T. S. Eliot and Berlin (Irving Berlin, the songwriter) is feeble; it is the refrain, dissolved in our world of early nineteenth-century romantics (Musset and Nerval—Schubert and Robert Franz) ' [*The Re-discovery of America*, p. 131.] With nostalgia neither defined nor evaluated, utterances like this remain safely beyond the range of discussion.

Simple homesickness appears to be typically an aspect of social life. True, the ' home ' one yearns for comprises the whole familiar framework—objects and institutions as well as people—within which one lives and in dealing with which one possesses established habits and sentiments. (It was inevitable that Proust should record the experience: *Place Names* the second section of *Within a Budding Grove* has this for one of its explicit themes). Nevertheless, out of the whole framework, people are missed most.

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And it seems probable that the comfort of familiar furniture and routine is only a substitute for, or a suggestion of, the sense of security given by membership of an adequate social group. It may be that a ' herd instinct ' has to be assumed to explain the fact that social life gives this satisfaction, but the assumption is questionable. All that seems indisputable is the obvious fact: that we do put high value upon the sharing and sanctioning by others of our interests, attitudes, and sentiments.

But the notion of ' others ' and the group in this sense needs to be examined. Being bound to other people by having any interest in common with them constitutes group membership of a sort. An explorer living with a primitive tribe and sharing their interest in food-seeking, means of shelter and what-not, is in some degree a member of the group. Nevertheless he is much more a member of his civilized group at home, for that group shares not only his primitive impulses but some at least of his more highly developed ways of behaving and feeling. To be fully adequate a group must not only offer fellowship in the everyday concern for simple comfort, physical and emotional; it must also be able to appraise the finer achievement of its members. Not that a genius must surround himself with equals before he can feel comfortable; simply that he and his group should recognise that his most advanced work is at least rooted in socially sanctioned evaluations. Loyalty to the group and satisfaction from it must both be incomplete for people whose deepest concerns appear to be unrelated to those of the group. And in everyday life the fundamental need for social backing is obscured by the necessity for constantly ignoring the standards of the group with which one happens to dwell, but of which one is not wholeheartedly a member. It is the frustrated desire for an adequate group that lies behind typically nostralgic writing.

Synge's *Aran Islands* illustrates the point admirably. Synge periodically fled from ' civilization ' to the primitive Aran islanders, seeing in their manners something more congenial to his own attitudes. Certainly they jarred on him less than did civilized people, but naturally they could give him no positive fellowship in his complex interests. He would have liked to think that their manner of living was the everyday manifestation of a rather highly developed culture, of what he calls ' the real spirit of the island. '

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' Yet it is only in the intonation of a few sentences or some old fragment of melody that I catch the real spirit of the island, for in general the men sit together and talk with endless iteration of the tides and fish, and the price of kelp in Connemara.' He had abandoned one inadequate group for another, and he could find full fellowship in neither. His indictment of the civilized group after his return to the mainland is bitterly nostalgic. ' I have come out of an hotel full of tourists and commercial travellers, to stroll along the edge of Galway Bay, and look out in the direction of the islands. The sort of yearning I feel towards those lonely rocks is indescribably acute. This town that is usually so full of wild human interest, seems in my present mood a tawdry medley of all that is crudest in modern life. The nullity of the rich and the squalor of the poor give me the same pang of wondering disgust; yet the islands are fading already and I can hardly realise that the smell of the seaweed and the drone of the Atlantic are still moving round them.' His relief on taking flight is pathetic: ' It gave me a moment of exquisite satisfaction to find myself moving away from civilization in this crude canvas canoe that has served primitive races since man first went on the sea.' And his slight puzzled disappointment after sojourning with the primitive group points clearly to the social implication of his recurrent nostalgia: ' In some ways these men and women seem strangely far away from me. They have the same emotions that I have, and the animals have; yet I cannot talk to them when there is much to say, more than to the dog that whines beside me in a mountain fog. There is hardly an hour I am with them that I do not feel the shock of some inconceivable idea, and then again the shock of some vague emotion that is familiar to them and to me. On some days I feel this island as a perfect home and resting place; on other days I feel that I am a waif among the people. I can feel more with them than they can with me, and while I wander among them they like me sometimes, and laugh at me sometimes, yet never know what I am doing.'

Thomas Mann confirms the view that nostalgia is one outcome of incomplete membership of any social group when he describes lifelong nostalgia as the lot of Tonio Kröger, ' a *bourgeois* who strayed off into art, a bohemian who feels nostalgic yearnings for respectability, an artist with a bad conscience.'

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It is obviously impossible to state in general terms the causes underlying a writer's failure to satisfy his social needs. Each case would need separate analysis. Certainly there is no universal circumstance that renders nostalgia inevitable. The contemporary flank-rubbing herd that highly-developed people can form at any one period is naturally small, but it has the advantage of a tradition extraordinarily rich and accessible compared with that of the main community.[1] And though the flank-rubbing herd is a necessity, yet the recorded feelings and attitudes of people no longer living are remarkably effective in sanctioning and confirming one's own ways of living. However, it conceals a complication to speak as if the group simply sanctioned, or failed to sanction, the individual's way of living. It demands of him some degree of submissiveness. Sanction can have no meaning without the admission that social disapproval would have been equally significant. The individual need not submit to any person or accept any formulated canon, but he must acknowledge that other people's experience is relevant to his own. From that there follows inevitably the progressive modification of his personality as he deepens his understanding of contemporary attitudes, and still more of tradition. That part of him that he considers unique grows smaller and smaller (and at the same time more and more significant) the more fully he comes to see his own experience in the light of other people's.

> You tell me I am wrong.
> Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?
> I am not wrong.

That was a typical attitude of D. H. Lawrence, so Richard Aldington suggests. It is an attitude that everyone who matters in the least must hold in reserve, for it represents the only way in which the conservatism of the group can be overcome, the only way in which changes can be made in contemporary life, and tradition extended. But with Lawrence it was a more or less permanent attitude. He seems to have wanted sanction, and nothing but sanction, for the whole of his personality, and so, inevitably, he cut himself off from the possibility of group life.

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[1]The relation between the cultural tradition and different sections of the contemporary group deserves to be examined rather fully.

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The yearning for a group remained. It showed itself in him, as it did in a less significant way in Synge, as a desperate experimenting with primitive peoples. Naturally none of the experiments gave him what he wanted. An air of fantasia marks those parts of *The Plumed Serpent* that describes the general, social re-creation of the religion; an air that is absent from the treatment of the individual characters' experiences. His need of a group is always present; he was never self-sufficient. He seems to have been one of those men who cannot add to a tradition without first wrecking it—who cannot co-operate. It is typical of such men to believe that the mass of humanity or the mass of a people would come to support their particular valuations if only it could be freed from some artificial overlay. Gordon Craig's writings present the same picture of rebellion with nostalgia, and it is this state, perhaps, that underlies his belief in the possibility of a ' people's theatre ' (if he still believes in it).

These are crude simplifications, however, and the evaluation of nostalgia in writing demands the most delicate perception of a writer's attitude to his experience. It can be said in general that complete absence of nostalgia in a modern writer is suspect, suggesting complacent fellowship with the main commercial group, or seclusion with an academic group, or life among the cliques, or too little questioning and testing of the tradition. But permanent, unresolved nostalgia is a failure too. In most cases, probably, it can be traced to a failure of discrimination in resisting social coercion. It is presumably impossible to achieve the knife-edge balancing between humility and servility, the insight to judge one's judges, that would be ideal in one's relation to a social group; and the temptation to reject everything, cliques, conventions, and tradition, baby and bath, is unfortunately strongest for the most vigorous personalities.

Another kind of writing, altogether distinct from that considered already, might seem to invite the description ' nostalgic,' for one thing because it frequently expresses the writer's longing for his home. The following poem which I quote from memory is an instance (it is attributed to Rudolph Valentino):

All of them gift-books,
But plainly I see
Not one of them holds

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The gift for me.
I want a book
That will lazily roam
Down the dear pathway
To folks back home.

Lawrence's poem *Piano* is another example at a different level. This kind of writing reveals no craving for the social sanctioning of the writer's adult and complex ways of living. It seems more closely related to the impulse to abandon these for a time and regress to a simpler level of life, at which one's needs were slight and their complete satisfaction comparatively easy. Every advance to more complex integrations of behaviour involves, of course, effort, and the tendency is always present to throw up the sponge and take things easily—to regress to the earlier and simpler organisations of impulses. J. T. MacCurdy points out that the welcoming of death as a rest and a sleep is one expression of the tendency: the underlying impulse is not to go forward to meet death, but to go back to a state of freedom from effort, a state which has been approximated to only in pre-natal life. ' If reality is difficult to endure, and if acute consciousness is developmentally connected with the recognition of external reality, and if contact with the environment is essentially a function of consciousness. . . then a most natural regression would appear with a dissolution of consciousness associated with some expression of return to the earlier type of existence. One would expect the latter to be formulated as ideas of death and, in fact, this is a universal phenomenon. Suicide is common, death is frequently portrayed as a release from life. . .' [*Problems in Dynamic Psychology* p. 158—159]. So Chaucer makes his old man, weary of living, say:

' And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
I knokke with my staf, both erly and late,
And seye, " leve moder, leet me in!
Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin!
Allas! when shul my bones been at reste? . . . " '

A clear example of verse expressing regressive impulses is provided by Edward Shanks in *The Grey Land*:

There was a man who loved a wood so well,
Each separate tree, each flower, each climbing weed,

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That at the last he thither went to dwell
And mix himself with all those quiet things.
Then gradually left him thought and deed
And dead were all his soul's imaginings.
So day by day,
All his own being gently flowed away
And left him mixed indeed
With flower and climbing weed,
With them in summer green, in autumn grey.
So the grey country calls me till I go
And make surrender of myself again;
The misty hill, the leaden stream below
Are waiting to receive me when I will.
And if my stubborn heart and hands complain
A slow wind moves upon the misty hill
And whispers to me here of peace and rest,
Of union with stone and grass and tree,
Where being sleeps and is not curst or blest,
Where hands can never feel and eyes not see,
Where life and death alike are grey,
In this grey land that sucks my life away.

The underlying regressive tendency in this verse comes out clearly in contrast with the following by T. S. Eliot:

Because I cannot drink
There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is nothing again

. . .

Because I cannot hope to turn again
Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
Upon which to rejoice.

Rupert Brooke's poem *Retrospect* offers an example of regressive verse in which the ' mother ' references are very prominent:

O mother quiet, breasts of peace,
Where love itself would faint and cease!
O infinite deep I never knew,
I would come back, come back to you,

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Find you as a pool unstirred,
Kneel down by you, and never a word,
Lay my head, and nothing said,
In your hands, ungarlanded;
And a long watch you would keep;
And I should sleep, and I should sleep!

The fact of experiencing the tendency towards regression means nothing. It is the final attitude towards the experience that has to be evaluated, and in literature this attitude may be suggested only very subtly by means of the total context. In *The Grey Land* and in *Piano* the writer's attitude is clear. Shanks obviously finds a tranquil pleasure in the thought of throwing up the sponge. In Lawrence's poem the impulse seems to have been equally strong and is certainly expressed more forcefully, but the attitude is different. Lawrence is adult, stating the overwhelming strength of the impulse but reporting resistance to it and implying that resistance is better than yielding:

In spite of myself the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back. . . . .
    The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for
    the past.

There are of course several connecting links between regression and nostalgia. One is the likelihood that regressive tendencies will be especially strong in people who have found no adequate social group and tend to be nostalgic. Another is the fact that the longing for some remoter period than the present may unite both tendencies; regressive because the ideal period seems to have been free from difficulties that have to be met in the present, and nostalgic because the difficulties of the present are seldom unrelated to the difficulty of living with an uncongenial group.

The critical usefulness of an evaluation of nostalgia must rest on the possibility of detecting the feeling in a writer, and, here, unfortunately, definition and analysis are not much help. Everything depends on the reader's sensitiveness. One can say, however,

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that the word ought not to be used unless the quality of feeling to be described is recognisably similar to the common experience of homesickness: the feeling of distress for no localised, isolated cause, together with a feeling that one's environment is strange, and vaguely wrong and unacceptable. There is hardly a trace of this feeling—and it seems curious at first that there should not be—in Thomas Hardy's poems. Grief, regret, disappointment, remorse, are all to be found there, in their most poignant forms, but they have been felt only in situations in which they are generally recognised to be appropriate: the grief is for someone dead, the regret for neglected opportunities of living. There is no suggestion that Hardy was aware of isolation. The suspicion is unavoidable that his freedom from nostalgia implies too great a readiness to conform without question to the accepted canons of art and behaviour, and in line with this suspicion are the absence of significant technical innovations in his writing, and the fact (reported by Robert Graves) that he regarded *Marmion* as an indisputable standard in poetry. The account of his life by Mrs. Hardy reinforces the impression that he was never aware of isolation. One may quote in particular a letter he wrote to Alfred Noyes, severe, and full of surprise that such a man as Alfred Noyes should misinterpret his philosophy. ' It seems strange that I should have to remind a man of letters of what, I should have supposed, he would have known as well as I—of the very elementary rule of criticism that a writer's works should be judged as a whole, and not from picked passages that contradict them as a whole—.' Further in the letter he says, ' But it has always been my misfortune to presuppose a too intelligent reading public . . . " What a fool one must have been to write for such a public! " is the inevitable reflection at the end of one's life ' [*The Later Years of Thomas Hardy,* pp. 216-217]. This naïve exasperation at the end of his life strongly suggests that he somehow failed to see the impossibility of any genuine community between himself and the general public. His avoidance of public attention does not contradict this conclusion: he was still accepting a recognised niche in the public mind—that reserved for ' the secluded author '—just as Sir Basil Zaharoff and Mr. Montague Norman fit perfectly into the classificatory system of the public they shun.

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No pervasive tendency to nostalgia is to be found in T. S. Eliot's poems, but its absence here obviously demands a different explanation. There can be no doubt of Mr. Eliot's awareness of the limitations of the group he lives amongst: *Triumphal March,* and *The Journey of the Magi* express clearly an attitude that is evident enough in most of his work.

> We returned to our places, these kingdoms,
> But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
> With an alien people clutching their gods.

But the feeling of nostalgia is not pervasive, because the predicament it results from has been faced consciously and understood:

> I have heard the key
> Turn in the door once and turn once only
> We think of the key, each in his prison
> Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
> Only at nightfall, aethereal rumours
> Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus

His realisation of the inadequacy and misfortune of the ' independent ' man seems to underlie Mr. Eliot's insistence on the importance of a tradition and of the Church.

In Edward Thomas's poetry the feeling of nostalgia is pervasive.

> Never a word was spoken, not a thought
> Was thought, of what the look meant with the word
> ' Home ' as we walked and watched the sunset blurred.
> And then to me the word, only the word,
> ' Homesick,' as it were playfully occurred:
> No more.

> If I should ever more admit
> Than the mere word I could not endure it
> For a day longer: this captivity
> Must somehow come to an end, else I should be
> Another man, as often now I seem,
> Or this life be only an evil dream.

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Occasionally, its social origin is suggested, as in a poem where he speaks of being 'born into this solitude,' and describes himself listening to the rain,

> . . . thus in sympathy
> Helpless among the living and the dead,
> Like a cold water among broken reeds

In most of the poems there is no recognition of any underlying social cause for his feeling. Yet the quality of the melancholy so often suggests nostalgia that it is hard not to suppose that the unadmitted craving for an adequate social group lay behind his most characteristic moods. Even when he describes his unhappiness as the inevitable outcome of his temperament there are social overtones still to be heard:

> Over all sorts of weather, men, and times,
> Aspens must shake their leaves and men may hear
> But need not listen, more than to my rhymes.
>
> Whatever wind blows, while they and I have leaves
> We cannot other than an aspen be
> That ceaselessly, unreasonably grieves,
> Or so men think who like a different tree.

It is symptomatic too that his happier and more satisfying moments are often associated with an escape from other people, as though normally he never felt free from the pressure of a social group with which he could make no satisfying contact.

> Once the name I gave to hours
> Like this was melancholy, when
> It was not happiness and powers
> Coming like exiles home again,
> And weaknesses quitting their bowers,
> Smiled and enjoyed, far off from men,
> Moments of everlastingness.

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The same feature is evident in the poem, springing from a different mood that begins:

> Early one morning in May I set out,
> And nobody knew I was about.
> I'm bound away for ever,
> Away somewhere, away for ever.

It would be a mistake to complain because Edward Thomas refused to account for his moods and label them. But it is a defect that, through a failure to probe his unhappiness, he implied that its causes were remoter, less tangible and more inevitable than in fact they were. He seems to do this, for instance, in a characteristic poem called *Home*. The poem almost certainly springs from nostalgic feelings, but Edward Thomas gives them a much larger significance, larger than they deserve.

> Not the end: but there's nothing more.
> Sweet Summer and Winter rude
> I have loved, and friendship and love,
> The crowd and solitude:
>
> But I know them: I weary not;
> But all that they mean I know.
> I would go back again home
> Now. Yet how should I go?

One may even detect, what Thomas rarely betrays, the nostalgic's lack of genuine humility: 'all that they mean I know.' But he goes on to confess, not to nostalgia, but to the much more overwhelming doubt whether any life, once known, could satisfy him. It is well to remember that these, after all, are criticisms of what might have been only one phase of Edward Thomas's poetry. *The Other* (perhaps his most interesting poem) shows signs of a much more precise probing of experience that he usually attempted, and it is possible that he would have developed this kind of work. But of his existing body of poetry one may say that, though he does not avow it, there are signs everywhere of the predicament encountered by those who are isolated without being self-sufficient.

D. W. HARDING.

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'THE LITERARY MIND'

MR. MAX EASTMAN, in the book[1] that bears the title at the head of this essay, presents an interesting case. It is of himself that I am thinking. For, while the case he propounds about ' the literary mind ' is too naïve and muddled in its complacent philistinism to be seriously discussed, he does indeed witness most impressively to the decay of literary culture. His book may be recommended as a representative document. He is ' intellectual and a poet,' he tells us. Yet he can point to the almost complete disappearance of serious critical journals in the last few decades as evidence that we have improved. They have disappeared, he thinks, because Science has put out of date the literary culture they represented. We know nowadays where to go for ' verified statements,' and those who contend that literature matters vitally to civilization ' are fighting for the right of literary men to talk loosely and yet be taken seriously in a scientific age.'

Now ' literary men '—moralizing dons, Humanists and others—have indeed been guilty of a great deal of ' loose talk.' But the critic who proposes to discuss a ' classical movement ' led by ' Allen Tate, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Ivor Winters, Edith Sitwell, Robert Graves, Laura Riding ' convicts himself of a looseness that dimisses him with the loosest. Anyone who offers such a list must be pronounced not to know what he is talking about. Mr. Eastman simply cannot see the difference in intellectual status between Mr. Eliot and Miss Sitwell, except that he finds Miss Sitwell more discussible. In poetry he positively prefers her. *Ash-Wednesday* he refers to as an ' oily puddle of emotional noises,' but ' Edith Sitwell is, in my opinion, the most gifted of the modernist poets.' The late Arnold Bennett, it will be remembered, had a like preference. The reason is simple: it is that Miss Sitwell is simple, and offers her admirers, with ' modernist ' garnishings, what they expect to find in poetry—sentimental reveries, reminiscences of childhood, and so on. For

[1] *The Literary Mind.* Max Eastman [Scribners. 10/6d.]

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criticism she does not exist, either as a poet or a critic.

But no suspicion of his total incapacity troubles the assurance with which Mr. Eastman puts 'humane letters' in their place. 'Modernist' poetry is unintelligible, he explains, because 'Science has withdrawn intellect from literature,' and has left the poet nothing more serious to do than to engineer, as a defensive bluff, a 'revolt against meaningful language.' This innocent self-exposure, this complacent illiteracy, if it were merely amusing, would not be worth dwelling on. But what public can one count on to find it amusing? If one says that it is as absurd to defend as to attack 'modernist' poetry—that there is no 'modernist' poetry, but only two or three modern poets—what public will recognise a platitude? Mr. Eastman is an American, but here in England Mr. Eliot's poetry is explained over the wireless by Mr. Harold Nicolson, and our most intelligent weekly is, where literary criticism is concerned, a stronghold of anti-highbrow prejudice.

Mr. Eastman is right, though the case that he enforces is not what he intended: the tradition of literary culture is dead, or nearly so. If it was Science that killed it, it was not in the way that Mr. Eastman explains, but by being the engine of the social changes that have virtually broken continuity. The standards that, maintained in a living tradition, constituted a surer taste than any individual as such can pretend to, have gone with the tradition; there is now no centre and no authority, so that Mr. Eastman, Mr. Nicolson, Mr. Priestley or Mr. Walpole can assume authority without being in the eyes of the world ridiculous.

Mr. Eastman of course does not grieve over the loss, one of its manifestations being that he cannot realize it. For what I have spoken of as the literary tradition was more than literary, and it dissolution has bearings outside the field of mere adornment and amenity. To start with a limited and immediately pertinent one: what, as exhibited in *The Literary Mind,* is wrong with Mr. Eastman's *intelligence?*—That he is deficient in taste and sensibility is plain. My present point is that these deficiencies are associated with others of a kind that he could, perhaps, be brought to recognize. By a little analysis it should be possible to bring home to him that he is deficient on the side of intelligence. He maintains an air of incisiveness and intellectual rigour, but

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his writing is both loose (to use his own term) and blunt. Not only does he use such key words as ' experience,' ' interpretation ' and ' meaning ' with an uncritical looseness, but, apart from (or rather accentuated in) localizable confusions and fallacies, there is a pervasive debility, a lack of tension, outline and edge in his thinking. The point might be made by saying that he has none of that sensitiveness of intelligence without which all aparent vigour of thought is illusory. And when such a phrase as ' sensitiveness of intelligence ' suggests itself it begins to appear that the relation between ' intelligence ' and ' sensibility ' is not the simple distinction that is readily assumed.

In fact, Mr. Eastman's defect of sensibility is a defect of intelligence. This becomes plain if we say that he lacks fineness of perception, though there is a great deal more to be said. What we diagnose in expression, as inadequacy in the use of words, goes back to an inadequacy behind the words, an inadequacy of experience; a failure of something that should have pressed upon them and controlled them to sharp significance. Mr. Eastman does not offer himself, at any rate in *The Literary Mind,* as a poet, and so it is not required of him that his prose should evoke the concrete particulars of immediate experience. But his undertaking is such that without a fine sensibility, without a discriminating awareness, and without an ability to discern and fix differences of quality and degree, he is without his essential data. A certain fidelity to concrete particulars *is* required of him. And it may be hazarded of all thinking, however abstract, that is likely to interest those of us who are pre-occupied with the problems of living, that the criticism of it concerns its fidelity to concrete particulars, and the quality of these. No easy distinction between intelligence and sensibility comes to hand here. Of a good prose, in so far as it is abstract and general, it may be said that its virtues are a matter of the negative presence of the concrete and particular; it is not merely absence, but exclusion, an exclusion felt as a pressure. Exclusion implies a firm and subtle grasp; to exclude, the writer must have experienced, perceived and realized. Mr. Eliot is a major poet, and Mr. Eliot's prose is among the most finely and purely prosaic ever written; it is the efficient instrument of a fine critical intelligence.

The psychologist (if he bothered) might comment that to

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attempt to pass off such terms as 'intelligence' and "sensibility' in this way, without analysis and definition, is an amusingly innocent and impotent procedure. The reader I have in mind may, while agreeing that my use of the terms is plain enough for my purpose, comment that a truism could be enunciated with less fuss. I hope in this essay to show why I think the point worth insisting on, and worth developing at this non-technical level, in spite of the risks.

To begin with, let the reader I have supposed recall the reception that any serious attempt to apply critical intelligence to poetry almost universally meets with. If the critic is complimented on being intelligent, it is commonly with the implication that he would be a better critic if he were less so: 'intelligent' becomes, by an imperceptible transition, 'too intellectual.' The appreciation of poetry, we are told, is a matter of 'feeling' or 'insight,' not of 'willed intellectual effort.' A related judgment is that the 'Cambridge School' (whatever that may be) conceives poetry too much as a 'deliberate intellectual criticism of life.' I am not denying that certain wrong approaches to poetry may fairly be described as too intellectual (to err in such ways is to err by not being intelligent enough). My point is that any serious attempt to apply intelligence to poetry has to face prejudice against the 'intellectual' approach.

The reception of Mr. Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* [Chatto and Windus, 7/6d.] illustrated this. Reviewers who nerved themselves to tackle the book (it was shamefully neglected) commonly paid tribute to the author's remarkable intelligence, but contrived to suggest that it was employed, at the best, in an arduous and interesting, but gratuitous, form of exercise which had little bearing upon 'appreciation'; for those of us who are no good at mathematics and science, it would be hinted, there is still a field, requiring no cerebral tension, where we need not feel inferior. Now I will not deny that Mr. Empson's zest has sometimes kept him going too long and too ingeniously in the pursuit of ambiguities; but for the most part his analysis is simply the appropriate, critical, and very unusually efficient application of intelligence to poetry. Partly it is a matter of noting and registering with conscious attention what was implicit in our response. But also (and this is the report of everyone with whom I have

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discussed the book) Mr. Empson convicts us again and again of having missed something essential in the passages we thought we knew—of having failed to respond properly. It was an illusion that, though we might not be given to ' intellectual ' analysis, we were, as persons of taste, able to ' appreciate.' And was the deficiency in our response one of sensibility or intelligence?

' Intelligence ' is the word that, with my eye upon Mr. Max Eastman, I want at the moment to stress. Mr. Empson's book serves to bring home how largely and in what ways literary criticism is a matter of intelligence. The bearings of this conclusion upon Mr. Eastman's case are well brought out by this admirable passage from Mr. Ezra Pound's perverse but fruitfully provocative pamphlet *How to Read* [Desmond Harmsworth, 2/-]:

' Has literature a function in the state, in the aggregation of humans, in the republic, in the *res publica* . . . ? It has.

' . . . It has to do with the clarity and vigour of " any and every " thought and opinion. It has to do with maintaining the very cleanliness of the tools, the health of the very matter of thought itself. Save in the rare and limited instances of invention in the plastic arts, or in mathematics, the individual cannot think and communicate his thought, the governor and legislator cannot act effectively or frame his laws, without words, and the solidity and validity of these words is in the care of the damned and despised *literati*. When their work goes rotten—by that I do not mean when they express indecorous thoughts—but when their very medium, the very essence of their work, the application of word to thing goes rotten, i.e., becomes slushy and inexact, or excessive or bloated, the whole machinery of social and of individual thought and order goes to pot.'

This is well said. Literary criticism has a correspondingly high function, and literary study, so far from producing the ' literary mind ' conceived by Mr. Eastman, should be the best possible training for intelligence—for free, unspecialized, general intelligence, which there has never at any time been enough of, and which we are peculiarly in need of to-day. This is not to say that literary criticism should not be specialized, in the sense that its practice should be controlled by a strict conception of its special nature and methods. Indeed, the more one realizes its importance in the education of general intelligence, the more

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is one concerned for strictness of conception and practice.

But to demand such strictness in any field is to invite the charge of dogmatic intolerance and narrowness. It will not, for instance, do to refer as matter of commonplace to the almost complete absence of profitable Shakespeare criticism after two centuries of what must, for want of another word, be called critical activity. It may be said that, as a rule, the more respectable the critic the more deplorable the result: if, of the the academics, Bradley is the best, he is the worst. How long has Hamlet been down from Wittenberg? How many children had Lady Macbeth? Those *Appendices* of Bradley's are, perhaps, now commonly thought odd, and if they don't bring home the preposterousness of his approach (which is the orthodox), argument hardly will. There may sometimes be uses for the detective, psychological, moral, philosophical or acrostical approaches, but they are not literary criticism, and unless controlled by literary criticism they are vicious. Of course, where Shakespeare is concerned, literary criticism needs its auxiliaries[1], but it is still the essential approach; yet, though we have the auxiliaries, their *raison d'être* (for want of which they themselves are usually defective) hardly exists. The critical approach to a Shakespeare play will not consider it as primarily a pattern of characters (or persons), with their 'psychologies,' in action and interaction, but will remember that *we* form these by abstraction from Shakespeare's words—that he didn't create persons, but put words together—and it will apply this principle or truism in a strenuous critical method. This does not mean that the critic will not have to consider character, action and moral questions, but that his concern with these will be a relevant one and so profitable. Bradley's is, as a rule, more or less subtly irrelevant, and has little to do with the appreciation of Shakespeare. His method is not intelligent enough, and, to reverse my earlier stress, the defect of intelligence is a default on the part of sensibility; a failure to keep closely enough in touch with responses to particular arrangements of words.

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[1]I find that Miss M. C. Bradbrook deals admirably with the issues raised here in her *Elizabethan Stage Conditions* [Cambridge University Press, 5/-].

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The need for a strict conception of literary criticism and for a rigorous discipline in practice will perhaps be assented to as obvious where Shakespeare is concerned. Something that may be called in a respectable sense the ' literary mind '—a mind with a special literary training—is obviously in place here. It is equally so, if less obviously, in dealing with certain writers, poets or prose-artists, who are not pure artists, but invite the discussion of doctrine or ideas as such; by intelligence, that is, apart from sensibility, or apart, at any rate, from the trained sensibility of the literary critic. Wordsworth is an instance. He invites us to discuss his ' philosophy.' It is disastrous to accept. Or rather, the only profitable approach to the ' philosophy ' is by way of strict literary criticism. Arnold's word is perhaps even more apt than he intended; the philosophy is an illusion. It simply does not exist to be discussed as such. If you find anything to discuss, to a great extent you put it there yourself. ' To a great extent ' is a necessary concession: that Wordsworth *had* ideas is not an illusion. But the only way to fix anything for discussion in the shifting verbosities of his abstract ' thinking ' is to start from the concrete and never to lose touch with it. What is successful as poetry is obviously 'there'; its abstractable implications, or those encouraged by a general knowledge of Wordsworth, may be coaxed out as far as seems discreet into the Wordsworthian philosophic fog and the poetry made the solid nucleus for such organisation in terms of ' thought ' as seems worth attempting. But we ought never to forget that Wordsworth matters as a ' thinker ' only (if at all) because he is a poet.

The same rule and the consequent procedure apply to D. H. Lawrence, and in his case, perhaps, it will be more readily perceived that there is reason for insisting on them. For Lawrence's ' thought ' bears upon issues that are urgent to us and have been much in debate. He was a ' prophet,' but it is only because he was an artist of genius that his prophecy matters. But for that genius he would have demanded no more attention as a thinker than the mob of anthroposophists, Keyserlings, and hierophants of psycho-mythopœia. His gift lay, not in thinking, but in experiencing, and in fixing and evoking in words the feelings and perceptions that seemed to him most significant. Lawrence's commentary on experience, his doctrine, must be approached by

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way of the concrete, the successful art; criticism of the doctrine cannot be separated from judgments concerning literary success or failure; discussion, to be intelligent, must be controlled by the critical sensibility. There is no other way of maintaining relevance, of fixing anything in Lawrence for examination, of ensuring that discussion or elucidation shall not be merely a matter of using Lawrence as an opportunity to expound something of one's own. I had insisted on this approach by literary criticism in an essay on Lawrence and so was gratified as well as depressed when Mr. Middleton Murry confirmed me. For, in writing *Son of Woman,* he was so interested in the doctrine and so convinced that he understood it and Lawrence that he did not trouble to apply such a discipline as I have contended for. And *Son of Woman* is another book about Mr. Middleton Murry. As such it is interesting. But it has the appearance of being a book about Lawrence and in so far as it passes for such it is vicious. However, perhaps the pervasive tone and the constant implication that Mr. Murry has the key and the measure—the Absolute—in his pocket, give warning enough to all but the simple-minded. But the book remains an apt illustration for my argument, and not the less so because when Mr. Murry does make judgments of literary criticism he shows himself, for one who has been so fine a critic, almost incredibly defective in sensibility. He says, for instance, of *The Plumed Serpent* : ' It is Lawrence's greatest work of " art." ' Now to the critical sensibility *The Plumed Serpent* is notable among Lawrence's novels for betraying by a certain strain, a falsity, a forced tone (capable of analysis), that Lawrence does not really feel what he wants to feel, that he does not believe what he is trying to believe. Here was an opportunity to open an indubitably relevant critique, which might in due course have pointed out, among other things, that the terrible monotony of *The Plumed Serpent* (this is not to deny the marks of genius in it) is a comment on Lawrence's prophecy. But whatever Mr. Murry's intelligence may have been doing, it was not a critic's sensibility he chose to employ here; and the defect of sensibility shows as a defect of intelligence.

It should now be plain that the ' literary mind '—the intelligence trained as it can be only in the study of literature—has work to do outside the field of literary ' appreciation.' Why,

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for instance, has the debate about 'Humanism' been so depressing? The issues it handles belong to a realm where it is extremely difficult to do anything at all—to say anything that advances discussion; for the handling, intelligence of the kind indicated is an essential qualification. Its absence, the defect of sensibility, is manifested in the debile abstraction of that prose with which we are all too familiar. There may be no gross fallacies; but without a sustained, tense and living relation with the concrete, with the particulars of experience, the intellectual respectability and the erudition are barren. Many Humanists (and anti-Humanists) seem incapable of particular experience at all. D. H. Lawrence had a genius for it, and his importance as a 'thinker' is that he could command the concrete by creative art. One does not criticize Humanists (or anti-Humanists) for lacking this gift. Their undertaking is not creative; but it does nevertheless demand a discriminating capacity for experience, and an ability to keep in close touch with the concrete by means of the critical intelligence. So it was a damning comment on Professor Irving Babbitt and his associates when, in a manifesto published in *The New Republic*, they were challenged to produce their record with regard to contemporary letters: it is, of course, one of complacent obtuseness.

We have in England erudite and laborious essayists who invite the same kind of comment. Mr. McEachran, for instance, is distinguished, not only by his comparative modesty of tone and his brevity, but also by the frankness with which he exhibits something like a complete lack of interest in literature, music and art. That he knows nothing of music he explicitly does not consider a disqualification, for he argues that it is better to be unmusical [see *The Civilized Man* pp. 132 ff.]. The plastic arts he does suppose himself to be interested in; but how complete an illusion this is may be gathered from his finding it possible to argue (the extraction does him no injustice) that 'because a civilized man is higher than a savage, a statue portraying him is a greater thing than a statue of a savage, however beautifully executed, and this because a civilized man is higher than a savage' [*The Civilized Man* p. 117]. As for his degree of literary education, it is fairly suggested by the way in which he argues from *Faust*: 'The task of the second part, which from the point of view of poetry is inferior to it on the whole, was to fill out some of these defects

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[of the first part, which doesn't suit Mr. McEachran's argument at all]: to present Goethe's outlook as not finally diverse from the one we have said to be human' [*The Civilized Man* p. 70]. The assumption that poetical inferiority has no bearing on the argument is characteristic of the type of thought: an abstract 'outlook' that in its loose generality can be attributed to Goethe is all the writer is interested in. Here we have localized for inspection the pervasive weakness that makes such books as *The Civilized Man,* however erudite and careful, so barren and impotent.

Mr. Lawrence Hyde is a critic of Humanism, but his book, *The Prospects of Humanism,* exhibits the same weakness. He appears to be entirely without critical sensibility. He finds that, in the sphere of literature, 'there is a never-ending stream of biography, criticism, and fiction, all incredibly interesting and readable, all artistically produced, all written with a clearness, a vivacity, a subtle provocativeness, which makes them almost irresistible to any person of imagination and taste' [*The Prospects of Humanism* p. 126]. He speaks of 'the remarkable amount of distinguished and sincere work which is appearing at the present time. The standard of execution is incredibly high; every month there appear a whole row of books, each of which represents the best which the talented author has in him (or her; particularly her)' [*The Prospects of Humanism* p. 155]. This innocence is so amiable that one would rather not have had to point out how completely it damns Mr. Hyde as a thinker. It is not unrelated to the quality that enables him to discuss the 'thought' of Mr. J. C. Powys seriously.

Then there is Mr. Montgomery Belgion, who is not amiable, but as 'a steady contributor' to *The Criterion* (see April issue), insists on some notice. His function in the commonwealth, he feels, is to expose current confusions and fallacies by rigorous intellectual analysis; and it would not be difficult to expose Mr. Belgion's confusions and fallacies by the method he affects. But few sensitive readers of *The Human Parrot* will bother to do that; it is so plain that Mr. Belgion's is not a sensitive intelligence. He does not hazard himself much in the field of literary judgment, but he leaves no room for doubt about the quality of his critical sensibility. For all his air of nice precision his tools are soft and blunt.

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I have already referred to the relation between Mr. Eliot's poetic gift and the quality of intelligence exhibited in his literary criticism. It is in place to note that the distinction of his intelligence appears as plainly when he applies it to general questions. Whether one agrees with him or not, it is impossible not to see that he is in a very different class from Professor Irving Babbitt and Messrs. McEachran, Hyde and Belgion: he really does something with his words.

But up to now I have narrowed the issue too much. To return to Mr. Max Eastman: in the deficiencies that we have discussed he does not, we see, stand alone; but in his attitude to Science he is, at this date, remarkable. Few scientists would make the claims for it that he does. He believes with implicit faith that it will settle all our problems for us. In short, he lives still in the age of H. G. Wells. 'And nobody,' he says scornfully, 'is going to consult humane letters about the mortal problems of our industrial civilization; he is going to consult sociology and economics.' But sociology and economics, if they are to be sciences, can give no adequate answer to the questions that are waived by that phrase, 'the standard of living,' as the economists use it. Our problems cannot be settled without reference to the ends of life, without decisions as to what kind of life is desirable, and it is an elementary fallacy to suppose that such decisions can be left to Science. But 'humane letters,' though they may have no authority in the province of 'certified facts,' have a good deal of authority in the question of what, in the long run, humanity its likely to find a satisfactory way of life. One way of indicating the deficiency as prophets of Mr. Bernard Shaw, Lord Russell and Mr. H. G. Wells (Mr. Eliot's disrespect towards them shocks Mr. Eastman) is to say that they have missed, or are incapable of, the education that can be got through 'humane letters.'

What I have in mind is no mere training of the individual sensibility such as, for the not incapable, a course of practical criticism could provide. Indeed, the problem cannot be adequately thought of as one of the 'culture' of individuals. No doubt if Mr. Wells could read Shakespeare and had some knowledge of Dante his sense of value would be finer. But a concern for 'culture' in that sense is inadequate to the issues. It is to the culture that transcends the individual as the language he

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inherits transcends him that we come back; to the culture that has decayed with tradition. The standards maintained in such a tradition, I remarked near the beginning of this essay, constitute a surer taste than any individual can pretend to. And it is not merely a matter of literary taste. The culture in question, which is not, indeed, identical with literary tradition but which will hardly survive it, is a sense of relative value and a memory—such wisdom as constitutes the residuum of the general experience. It lives only in individuals, but individuals can live without it; and where they are without it they do not know what they miss. And the world, troubled as it is, is unaware of what is gone. So nearly complete is the gap in cultural consciousness that to-day those who win attention by their disinterested concern for the future of the race are mostly of the type of Mr. Wells. Mr. A. L. Rowse's *Politics and the Younger Generation* is representative. Though it mentions most of the names that are current to-day as having 'culture' value, it betrays an essential illiteracy; the author, that is, in so far as reading means ability to approach literature, shows that he cannot read. And to this illiteracy relates, in the ways suggested, the blurred muddle of the writing, a certain unnecessary grossness of manners and a disabling impercipience where the problems of the 'standard of living' are concerned.

To revive or replace a decayed tradition is a desperate undertaking; the attempt may seem futile. But perhaps some readers of *Scrutiny* will agree that no social or political movement unrelated to such an attempt could engage one's faith and energy. The more immediate conclusions would seem to bear upon education. No one aware of the problem will entertain easy hopes, for, inevitably, the machinery of education works in with the process of the modern world; and in the absence of standards, how can we start a reverse process? Something in the nature of luck is needed; the luck, let us say, that provides a centre of stimulus and a focus of energy at some university. All that falls under the head of 'English' there becomes, then, in spite of Mr. H. G. Wells, of supreme importance.

Unhappily, the connotations of the term 'academic' are of ill augury: the concern for 'tradition' that I have in mind will not be that commonly associated with formal education. Everything must start from and be related to the training of sensibility,

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that kind of training in which Mr. Richards has been a pioneer. Then with some hope the study of literary history—of periods, developments and relations—may be directed to producing a real grasp of the idea of living tradition. Sensibility and the idea of tradition—both concerns are essential. The latter is inseparable from the former; otherwise we have the academic sterility, the Humanist manipulation of the barren idea, the inability to conceive tradition as a matter of organic life. And no one could propose to foster the idea of living tradition by a study of literature that should ignore the present. It is when we come to the present that a serious interest in literature becomes inevitably something more; and a serious attempt of the kind under discussion would associate education in ' English ' with the study of the background of literature, its cultural and sociological conditions and bearings, present and past, of cultural history and so on.

As for the schools, it seems a particularly vicious waste that intelligent men should have to enter teaching as a *pis aller,* with little hope but to become spiritless tenders of the machine. That, for those who teach English, there is, or might be, a function commanding enthusiasm I have implied above. For the training of sensibility should begin at school, and would command in both teacher and pupils a deeper interest than Verity's notes. And a good deal might be done to cultivate a critical awareness of contemporary civilization. Many who have to make their living by the machine will smile sadly or cynically at these suggestions. And yet there are some opportunities. Even now, without the impulsion and support that I have desiderated and without good books, men are contriving to do valuable work on these lines.

An essay on the ' literary mind ' has developed, significantly (if I have not divagated), into this. The reader may smile at my portentousness. I do not, at any rate, suppose myself to have suggested a complete programme for the regeneration of mankind. My essay is an answer to the challenge represented by Mr. Eastman's book. As one devoted to the study and teaching of literature I have asked myself: why do I think this devotion, in an age of ' crises,' a worthy one? My answer, if not modest, is as honest and as serious as I can make it.

F. R. Leavis.

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NOTES ON THE STYLE OF MRS. WOOLF

IN reading any of the later novels of Mrs. Woolf, a curious and persistent trick of style obtrudes itself on the attention.

'But for women, I thought, looking at the empty shelves, these difficulties are infinitely more formidable. . . '[1]

'The mind is certainly a very mysterious organ, I reflected, drawing in my head from the window, about which practically nothing is known. . . '[2]

'There is a coherence in things, a stability: something, she meant, is immune from change and shines out (she glanced at the window with its ripple of reflected light). Here, she felt, putting down the spoon, here was the still space that lies about the heart of things. . . '[3]

The first two passages are ratiocinative, the last a description of a mood. Yet the little asides serve the same purpose in all three: by stressing time and place, they deflate the statement: the affirmation is given a relative value only: neither the reader nor the writer is implicated: they are not trapped into any admissions, or required to endorse anything in more than a qualified way. The effect has been described by T. E. Hulme:

'The classical poet never forgets the finiteness, the limit of man. . . If you say an extravagant thing, there is always the impression of yourself standing outside it and not quite believing it.'

Mrs. Woolf refuses to be pinned down in this way, and consequently she is debarred from a narrative technique, since this implies a schema of values, or even from the direct presentation of powerful feelings or major situations. In *Mrs. Dalloway* the most powerful feelings depend on more powerful feelings long past: the old

[1] *Room of One's Own*, p. 79. [2] Ibid, p. 146. [3] *To the Lighthouse*, p. 164.

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relationships between Clarissa, Peter, and Sally Seaton, the war experiences of Septimus Warren Smith. They are reflected, indirect, ' the reward of having cared for people. . . '[1] In *To the Lighthouse* the feelings are peripheral: they are minor manifestations of powerful forces: as for instance when Mrs. Ramsay reassures her husband on the terrace. The success of the book is due to the fact that the reader accepts the implication of the major forces behind the small situations. But even then the real nature of the subject is cloaked by Mrs. Woolf's method of description through a kind of metaphor which has a highly abstracting effect.

Whenever the direct presentation of powerful feelings or major situations is inescapable, Mrs. Woolf takes refuge in an embarrassing kind of nervous irony (as in the bracketed passages in *To the Lighthouse,* part two).

' This violent kind of disillusionment is usually to be expected of young men in the prime of life, sound in wind and limb, who will later become fathers of families and directors of banks.'[2]

' Here a girl for sale: there an old woman with only matches to offer.'[3]

' A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.'[4]

That ' mercifully ' at least might have been spared.

For Doris Kilman and Charles Tansley (who are parallel figures) Mrs. Woolf reserves her heaviest satire. Miss Kilman's feelings for Elizabeth or Tansley's sensations at the dinner party are analysed with a brutality that is faintly discomforting. They are both devoid of the social sense, scholars who have developed the intelligence at the expense of the arts of living.

The heroines on the contrary live by their social sense: they are peculiarly sensitive to tone and atmosphere: they are in fact artists in the social medium, with other people's temperaments and moods as their materials. Mrs. Ramsay is the complement of Lily Briscoe, ' Mrs. Ramsay, saying *Life stand still here:* Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent (as in

[1] *Mrs. Dalloway,* p. 13. [2] *Jacob's Room,* p. 247. [3] Ibid, p. 132. [4] *To The Lighthouse,* p. 207.

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another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent). . . In the midst of chaos there was shape: this eternal passing and flowing was struck into stability. *Life stand still here,* Mrs. Ramsay said.'[1]

It is the arresting of a single ' moment,' a significant spot in the temporal sequence that is Art for Mrs. Ramsay and Mrs. Woolf. In *The Spot on the Wall,* Mrs. Woolf describes her technique, which is essentially static. A single moment is isolated and forms a unit for the sensibility to work on. The difficulty lies in relating the various moments. Intensity is the only criterion of a detached experience and there is a consequent tendency for everything to be equally intense in Mrs. Woolf's works. Everything receives the same slightly strained attention: the effect is not unlike that of tempera painting, where there is exquisite delicacy of colour, but no light and shade. (The connection of this with the refusal to assent to a statement absolutely is too obvious to need any stressing).

Mrs. Woolf's difficulties have always been structural. In *Jacob's Room* she hardly attempted a solution: in *Mrs. Dalloway* she began the rigid telescoping of the time sequence which was developed in *To the Lighthouse.* A series of echoes and cross references form the real framework of the book; they are of the kind Joyce had used in *Ulysses,* but there is nothing to correspond to the more bony support which in *Ulysses* is provided by the structure of the episodes. The precarious stability of *To the Lighthouse* dissolved into the muddle of *Orlando* (in any case a *jeu d'esprit*), and the futile counterpointing of *The Waves.*

Mrs. Woolf's books seem to be built up in a mosaic from the ' moments ': scenes, descriptions, odd names recur from time to time. Here is a typical case:

' Already the convolvulus moth was spinning over the flowers. Orange and purple, nasturtium and cherry pie, were washed into the twilight but the tobacco plant and the passion flower over which the great moths spun were white as china.'[2]

' How she loved the grey white moths spinning in and out, over the cherry pie, over the evening primroses.'[3]

Moll Pratt the flowerseller and the Reverend Edward Whittaker,

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[1]Ibid, p. 249. [2]*Jacob's Room,* p. 90. [3]*Mrs. Dalloway,* p. 22.

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figures who appear for a moment only, are in *Jacob's Room* and *Mrs. Dalloway;* and the Dalloways themselves are of course from *The Voyage Out.*

This kind of thing developed into the subtler correspondence between parts one and three of *To the Lighthouse,* as for instance, Cam's recollections of the stag's head.[1]

The significant moments, the units of Mrs. Woolf's style are either delicate records of the external scene, expressed in epigrammatic metaphor usually (' The whole platefuls of blue sea,' ' The dragon-fly paused and then shot its blue stitch further through the air ') or the presentation of a mood such as Mrs. Ramsay's reverie on the terrace.[2] These moods are hardly ever dramatic, i.e., bound by the limitations of the character who experiences them. The personality of Mrs. Ramsay on the terrace or of Mrs. Dalloway in her drawing room does not matter: neither their individuality nor the plot is of any relevance. The mood is in fact an isolated piece of pure recording, of a more complex kind but not essentially different from the epigrammatic metaphor. It is less an emotion than a sensation that is presented: the feeling is further depersonalized by Mrs. Woolf's use of metaphor: for instance in the description of Mr. Ramsay appealing to his wife.[3]

These two elements of Mrs. Woolf's style, the observation of the external world and the description of moods, are separated out in her last book, *The Waves.* The interchapters describe the movements of sun and tides (the sea is for Mrs. Woolf a symbol of the eternal and indifferent natural forces)[4]: this movement forms a kind of parallel to the development of the lives of the characters. But the effect of a page or two of epigrammatic metaphor is very fatiguing: the myopic observation, the lack of variations in the tension impose a strain on the reader. Sometimes phrase-making conquers accuracy: ' the lark peeled his clear ring of song and dropped it through the silent air ' suggests the long call of a blackbird, but hardly the trills and twitters of the lark.

In the main portion of the book, there are no solid characters, no clearly defined situations and no structure of feelings: merely sensation in the void. Without any connections of a vital sort

[1] *To the Lighthouse,* pp. 177 and 313. [2] Ibid, p. 29-30. [3] Ibid, p. 61.
[4] *Mrs. Dalloway,* p. 61; *To the Lighthouse,* p. 30.

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between them, with no plot in the Aristotelian sense, the sensations are not interesting. Emotions are reduced to a description of their physical accompaniments: the attention is wholly peripheral. This for example is the equivalent of the experience of being in love:

'Then there is the being drawn out, eviscerated, spun like a spider's web, twisted in agony round a thorn: then a thunder clap of complete indifference: the light blown out: then the return of measureless inexpressable joy: certain fields seemed to glow green for ever.'[1]

There had been hints of this danger even in the earlier works: 'how could one express in words these emotions of the body? To want and not to have, sent up all her body a hardness, a hollowness, a strain.'[2] Physical sensations, which are immediately present, and have no relations to any schema of values, are all that Mrs. Woolf dares to assume in her readers.

All attempt to order and select has gone. 'There is nothing that one can fish up with a spoon, nothing that one can call an event. . . How impossible to order them rightly, to detach one separately or give the effect of the whole. . . Nevertheless, life is pleasant, life is tolerable. Monday is followed by Tuesday, then comes Wednesday.'[3]

Mrs. Woolf never, as is so frequently asserted, attempts to reproduce the process of thinking. Such generalized activity does not interest her: moreover, thinking implies a thesis which one is ready to defend. Mr. Ramsay, who is a philosopher, 'thinks' with the most helpless particularity: the progress of human thought is symbolised for him by an alphabet, just as for Lily Briscoe, a large kitchen table stands for the mental pursuits of Mr. Ramsay himself. Their mental atmospheres are indistinguishable: and in both cases, the mood is not one of thought but of reverie.

The heroines are astonishingly ingenuous. Their tact and sensitiveness are preserved in a kind of intellectual vacuum. Mrs. Dalloway 'muddled Armenians and Turks: and to this day, ask her what the Equator was and she did not know.'[4] Mrs. Ramsay ponders 'A square root? What was that? Her sons knew. She

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[1] *The Waves*, p. 274. [2] *To the Lighthouse*, pp. 274-5. [3] *The Waves*, pp. 280-2. Cf. *Monday or Tuesday*, her first attack on the problem of the time sequence. [4] *Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 185.

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leant on them: on cubes and square roots: that was what they were talking about. . . and the French system of land tenure. . . She let it uphold her, this admirable fabric of the masculine intelligence.'[1] Compare the dependence of Mrs. Flanders and even of Lady Bruton.

The camouflage in *A Room of One's Own* serves the same purpose as this nervous particularising: it prevents Mrs. Woolf from committing the indelicacy of putting a case or the possibility of her being accused of waving any kind of banner. The arguments are clearly serious and personal and yet they are dramatised and surrounded with all sorts of disguises to avoid an appearance of argument.

The shrinking of the heroines is too conscious as the playfulness of *A Room of One's Own* is too laboured. To demand 'thinking' from Mrs. Woolf is clearly illegitimate: but such a deliberate repudiation of it and such a smoke screen of feminine charm is surely to be deprecated. Mrs. Woolf has preserved her extraordinary fineness and delicacy of perception at the cost of some cerebral etiolation.

M. C. BRADBROOK.

[1] *To the Lighthouse*, p. 164.

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ON A GRAVE OF THE DROWNED

They whittle their life-stick who go
Down to the threshing jaws. Goodbye
To the smutty lamp, goodbyes are hoarse,
Disused. ' Draw the last pint! ' There in the
Oil-black bay the muttering nets, a gale
Blowing against the wet finger. Gull once a
W pencilled against the gray, now
Dismantled, maimed and set upon by friends:
Beaten off by bloody beaks, crunched feathers
Strike the shale ledges, wearily take
The backward, forward of the foam.

These went the watery bridge to know
Or numb, insurgent; on thole-pins spent
The dizzy creak of racked sinews and
Stalled with a thew-thrust, whipcord taut,
Jarring alarms that throbbed at ear
Passing bells of singing drowsiness.
Then glaucous eyes crammed full.

Above that mounded tale of many,
Disintegrated one, a beacon autumn tree
Irradiated from within swirls
Outward in eddies of russet light.

RONALD BOTTRALL.

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THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

SCRUTINY, I understand, is not primarily a political journal. It will not discuss party politics, nor the detailed methods of social or political reforms. But it will consider the broader political issues; and there it is surely right. For, in that larger sense, these determine everybody's life. When, therefore, I was asked to contribute an article to this first number, I thought I could not do better than say a few words about the political outlook, as it appears after the four years of war and the fourteen of what can hardly be called peace.

Peace and war, I will say to begin with, is still the main and dominant issue affecting everybody, whether they realise it or no, in the most intimate and personal way. For if another big war breaks out, as it might do almost at any moment, every young man of military age will be conscripted, and probably every woman too, and everyone not of military age will be expected to devote themselves to work bearing directly upon the war. The French have actually worked out a complete scheme on these lines, and quite possibly the English have too.

Now, thought it is only fourteen years after the close of the Great War, the danger of another is more obvious, and perhaps greater, than it was in 1914. Already indeed war has been waging in the Far East; and, though there is a temporary lull, there is no sign or probability of permanent peace. Nor is there any evidence that there is a real and genuine revolt against war in what is loosely called public opinion. The pacifists—too few to begin with—are divided among themselves on the great question of sanctions; and their influence suffers accordingly. Another minority, much more powerful than they, for it includes the officers of the army, navy and air force as well as a considerable body of laymen, is sceptical about the possibility, and even the desirability, of getting rid of war; while the mass of people is simply inattentive

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and indifferent. To illustrate the state of mind in this country, I will recall to your minds that, while Lord Cecil was doing his best at Geneva to stop the Far Eastern War, the Government at home was sanctioning the export of arms to extend and increase it; and this course of procedure was clearly approved by the bulk of public opinion. The same thing, of course, was going on, with the same frank cynicism, in France and in the United States, and no doubt in other countries. This one fact, to those who can reflect, throws a flood of light on the real character both of governments and of public opinion.

In England, nevertheless, there is, I should say, no active desire for war, merely the confused muddling which invariably leads to it. But it is very different on the continent of Europe. In Fascist Italy, the whole population, from the age of five upwards, is being militarised from top to bottom. Germany, driven to desperation by the treatment meted out to her during the last ten years, with an unemployed population of some seven million male adults, with a standard of life so low as to be hardly better than starvation, with the middle class practically destroyed and with an intellectual proletariat of something like a hundred thousand—Germany is in a state of desperation which is reflected in the enormous minority of Nazis and Communists at the recent presidential election and their successes in Prussia and other states. And the followers of Hitler, it must be remembered, have no constructive policy at all. They are a despairing mob, ready for any adventure, to whatever catastrophes it may lead. Then there is Bolshevist Russia, which, though it is the only state that stands for complete disarmament, is also convinced both of the necessity and the desirability of world revolution, and is devoting much of its energy to fostering that, all over the world, wherever it sees an opportunity, while China is quite likely to go Bolshevist in despair at its treatment by the League and the Powers—in which case, the Eastern War may easily be imported into the West.

This is a picture, not I think exaggerated, of the real condition of the world. What, if anything, is youth going to do about it? I cannot answer that question. I can only distinguish certain alternatives. There is, first, the view that it is no use to attack war directly, since it is the consequence of a whole complex of

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sentiments, passions, political and social conditions, and only a slow process of education and transformation can conjure it. That would be a view sound enough, if we had indefinite time to play about in. But, in view of the really imminent danger of war, we cannot afford to wait a hundred, or fifty, or twenty, or even ten years. A single war on the modern scale, with its necessary consequence, another bad peace, might very likely finish our civilization, either by a swift and therefore more merciful death, or by a slow and agonising consumption. Youth cannot afford to leave the problem of war alone and concentrate on other issues, in the hope that war will eliminate itself.

But if action is to be immediate, it can only take place through the activities, on the one hand, of the League of Nations, on the other, of the great Powers. I am not one of the many who hate or despise the League of Nations, but I recognise, as everyone else does, that it is very weak just because it is not supported anywhere by the bulk of public opinion. We are thrown back, therefore, on the great Powers; and that is a rather desperate recourse. At this moment the Disarmament Conference is meeting at Geneva, and disarmament is the crux of the whole matter. It is not only that the bigger the armaments the greater the danger to peace, though that is a self-evident proposition, and one which, for that very reason, those who desire war are eager to discredit. But also the failure of the Conference would mean the frank resumption of that anarchy of competitive armaments which led up to the war of 1914, and will lead as infallibly, and probably more rapidly, to another war—that will be indefinitely more destructive than the last. I need not dwell on these facts, which are perfectly well-known, to anyone who will take the trouble to learn, whether he be a militarist or a pacifist.

At the moment, therefore, the Disarmament Conference is the balance on which war and peace are being weighed; and two opposing attitudes confront one another. The British and Americans, acting apparently in harmony, are urging the abolition of certain types of weapon; while the French, pursuing consistently the policy they have adopted from the beginning, are insisting on an international force to be directed against an aggressor. This is the dilemma which has held up disarmament for the last ten years, and will hold it up again, unless it is somehow circum-

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vented. We English are apt to think that we are plainly right on this issue, and the French plainly wrong. I do not agree. So long as we refuse any guarantee that we will assist the League to deal with an aggressor, so long the French, and by consequence all other states, will rely only on their own forces. What we ought to have done, I suggest, when M. Tardieu made his proposals, is this. We should have said to the French: 'Certainly! We are all for sanctions. But on condition that national forces be reduced to a mere police to preserve international order.' If the French, as we are apt to suppose, are merely bluffing, that would at least call their bluff. The British attitude in my opinion is, and always has been, mistaken. Nor is it really because we are more pacific than other nations that we refuse to commit ourselves to sanctions. It is because we want to keep a free hand, to go to war when we like and abstain when we like. That is the attitude of military and naval authorities, here and everywhere else; and the reason why we have never been able to move a step towards disarmament is that admiralties and war-offices are opposed to it, and governments and public opinion follow them like a lot of sheep, though the only place they can lead to is the steep place that plunges down into a sea of blood. You young men may or may not agree with this view, but you ought at least to have a view; for, if you are indifferent, you will pay the price of indifference with your lives.

The other great question to which you cannot afford to be indifferent is that of property. More young men, I suppose, than ever before, even in the better-to-do classes, are in a precarious economic situation; and in the 'working' class we have, in England alone, between two and three millions unemployed. And here it will be worth while for you to consider whether really, under the present economic system, there is any chance that the number of unemployed will ever be reduced, whether it must not, on the contrary, be continually and indefinitely increased. Anyone who wants new light on that subject should read a book by Alec Henderson, called *The Economic Consequences of Power Production*, and see if he knows the answer to it. But, putting aside that possibly questionable view, we have, even so, between two and three millions unemployed in England, seven millions in Germany;

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even in France a number which begins to alarm that comparatively prosperous nation and a similar position in Italy; while, portent of portents, in the United States, hitherto regarded as the El Dorado of capitalism, more millions than can be computed are not merely out of work but starving, with the consequent imminence of a hunger revolution on a scale as yet unprecedented in history. That, surely, is enough to give anyone pause who may be inclined to suppose that our economic system is satisfactory.

If next one turns to the treatment of this problem by those who govern the world, and who belong, practically everywhere, to the capitalist classes, what have these governments done to deal with unemployment? Their one idea has been economy, and economy means, of necessity, the greatest sacrifices and hardships imposed on those who can least afford them. They have failed to see, or have preferred to ignore, the plain fact, that increased taxation, and consequent reduction of incomes, means fewer purchases, and therefore is injuring with one hand the industry it is endeavouring to help with the other. That the governments should perceive, what all intelligent economists now begin to assert, that it is spending not saving that is really wanted, would be expecting too much of them, but younger men it will seem, under the instruction of Mr. Keynes, are beginning to understand that point. All this, and much more, must be said from the merely domestic point of view. And when we turn from domestic to international issues the outlook is even worse. Every country is endeavouring to sell as much as it can and buy as little, with the result that international trade is gradually petering out, throttled by tariffs and currency restrictions. This is how Sir Arthur Salter in his recent book *Recovery* describes the position; and Sir Arthur is our best authority, and by no means a pessimist:—

'The defects of the capitalist system have been increasingly robbing it of its benefits. They are now threatening its existence. A period of depression and crisis is one in which its great merit, the expansion of productive capacity under the stimulus of competitive gain, seems wasted; and its main defect, an increasing inability to utilise productive capacity fully and to distribute what it produces tolerably, is seen at its worst. And, in the mood of desperation caused by impoverishment and unemployment, the challenge of another system becomes more formidable. No one

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can expect that even if we now get through without disaster, we can long avoid social disintegration and revolution on the widest scale if we have only a prospect of recurring depressions, perhaps of increasing violence.'

On the other hand, and here is the paradox, all this is only one side of the picture. Looked at from another angle, it changes to its own opposite; for, in this world which is in danger of perishing by its own incapacity, the production of wealth is continually increasing. The same science that is preparing, on the one hand, to destroy the world by war, is also furnishing the means to make it rich beyond the dreams of avarice, so that we are perishing in the midst of a plethora of abundance. Listen once more to Sir Arthur Salter summing up the facts: In 1925, he tells us, only seven years after the Great War with its immeasurable wastes and losses, world production had increased to 18% above the level of 1913; and by 1929 not only the world as a whole, but belligerent Europe had a substantially higher level of prosperity and average standard of living than in 1913. Figures, of course, being averages, are always deceptive, and in this world of increasing wealth the Chinese have been starving by millions. The fact, nevertheless, is that science has put within our hands, if we would but stretch them out to take it, all that we could possibly need in the way of material wealth. Why then do we not take advantage of our opportunities? The answer is because of our national passions, our class antagonisms, the lack of intelligence in our leaders of industry, and the general ignorance and indifference of our populations.

But now turn and look at another great fact. In one country and one only, Bolshevist Russia, the first attempt in history is being made, on a vast scale, to reconstruct society on the basis of the principle: ' He that will not work, neither shall he eat.' I need not elaborate the obvious qualifications which are necessary to convert that epigram into a political truth for the modern world. The term ' work,' of course, requires definition, and the exceptions, such as children, the sick and the old, require recognition. But the principle is sound, and I would suggest to the young that that too is a matter of the first importance to all of them, and not merely to those who are politically minded. What is wrong with Bolshevist Russia is not its goal, but its method, which is that

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of violence and dictatorship by a minority. Those evils, it is true, were forced upon Russia by the greater evil of the Czardom, and by the desperate efforts of the old régime, supported by this country, to overthrow the Revolution by force. That however, does not destroy and should not conceal, the significance of the Bolshevist Revolution. For Russia, in spite of agonies, cruelties and follies is blazing the path for the world. The economic system she is determined to establish is the right one; it is the means which she has been compelled to adopt that are wrong. The western world might, if it would, reach the same goal by a process less bloody and destructive. But for that we shall need the conviction and the work of the young.

I have selected as my theme these two issues, of war and capitalism, because they are plainly the great issues of our time, and because they must effect, directly and radically, every one whether a politician or no. They are no longer now what they might well have seemed when I was young, "academic." They stand here at the door, like Fates. Destruction or Salvation, and that not in some dim future but to-day or to-morrow, that is what politics, as I understand the matter, really means. Nor does politics exclude science, literature, art. Science in fact is a great political engine, working for good or for evil as it is directed by those who control society; and even if literature and art are held (wrongly I think) to be independent of all other interests, yet artists and writers are not. We really are, whether we like it or not, all members of one another, and that membership is one of the things *Scrutiny* can hardly avoid scrutinising.

G. Lowes Dickinson.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

IN the year 1500 the Italian *Relation of England* comments adversely upon the hardness of heart shown by the English in their treatment of their children, whom they used to send away, gentle and simple, to other families during what we should now call the school age, receiving other children in exchange; this practice they defended upon the grounds that it taught the children better manners. It is perhaps not fantastic to consider this belief as the root of our Public School system; certainly if we were to talk merely of instruction in class rooms there would be no reason to choose between boarding and day-schools, and if we attach to the word " manners " its former extensive meaning, we should find that the modern parent answers much as his predecessor did.

It is not my purpose in this essay to discuss the fascinating story of the remarkable growth of the Public Schools in the course of the 19th century; elsewhere in Europe the Renaissance foundations were overwhelmed by the tide of State Education, but in England they were re-edified with the result that to-day they stand as the one really powerful bulwark against bureaucratic instruction; this is a very important result, for educational progress is always made by local adaptation, by trial and experiment, by the creative work of individuals dealing with individual problems; it cannot be standardised. The achievement of this unique independence was largely the result of creating certain mechanisms by which the schools produced a type satisfactory to the Victorian middle classes; most of the institutions that are thought to be characteristic of the Public School, the Chapel, the Prefects, Compulsory Games, the O.T.C., for instance, are such 19th century mechanisms; and this is important, for the double problem of a boarding school is to make the school a satisfactory society to live in, and to relate this microcosm to Society in general. The problems of the microcosm itself alter little except in so far as

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the expedients used to solve them must be adapted to the changing Society, both as its changes effect the ideas and emotions of boys entering the school and as they affect the world they will have to live in.

Some of these changes appear in the expedients just mentioned; life in a Public School a century ago was chaotic, brutish, and violent, and Arnold used against it all the full fervour of his eschatological oratory—' The spirit of Elijah ' he said ' must ever precede the spirit of Christ '—and the full force of his mediaeval baronage, his prefects; later, after Darwinism had spread, we heard less of the Chapel as the centre of school life, more of the cricket-pavilion and of the excellent (pagan) tag ' Mens sana '; and later yet the O.T.C. appears as the adaptation for pre-war nationalism. In short, these means to producing a disciplined life varied as the idea of social duty varied, but their efficacy in each case depends upon the general views of Society. The Chapel played a very different part for the children of an age in which Mr. Gladstone classified people as ' Oncers ' or ' Twicers ' according to the number of their Sunday attendances at Church from that it can ever play for those whose parents usually attend no regular form of service at all; Mr. Gladstone had no need to classify any such. The O.T.C. had a different meaning in the period anticipating the War from any that it can have in a war-weary world. And, to take a different aspect of the problem, the value to a boy of prefectship in a chaotic and unruly school was very different from what it is in a civilised and orderly one; any feudal barony may become a mere privileged noblesse without function.

Yet the problems are basically always the same; it is the function of the school to be a half-way house between the home of one's parents and the home of one's own; to bridge the gap between sonship and parenthood, dependence and independence. The natural forces at work in the adolescent are invariable too, and the real meaning of the word " adult " remains permanent.

Regarding the schools for a moment as societies in themselves one sees in them a steady process of civilisation comparable to that which has occurred in the Middle Class itself; the change is from a Dickensian melodrama to Galsworthian comedy, and it has accompanied a change in social status, too, for just as the

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apothecary from whom Major Pendennis blushed to admit descent may now be Sir Horatio Bolus, Bart., or even Lord Bolus of Probe, so the little Grammar School has become the great Public School; and just as the aristocracy, headed by the Monarchy, became respectable, so the great Public School became bourgeois. With this general process of assimilation there has been a rapprochement of boys and masters that is, in its post war acceleration, the most important recent feature of Public School life.

Perhaps the most significant thing about this essay is that it has arrived so far without mentioning questions of curriculum; the important part of a Public School is its life, in which the boarder must contain all his emotions and feelings by the mere force of circumstance; he cannot, like the dayboy, regard his school life as a clerk regards his office life, as something extra to his real life at home. The comparison will serve to illuminate the difference of problems between the two sorts of school; Mr. Jones, the clerk, may be an excellent man, but to the office he is merely part of the mechanism for some specific purpose, his class-efficiency; the boarding school has to consider Jones as a whole, as a cell in an organism, and the curriculum is no more than a part of life in the school, and is governed by the living conditions. In practice the curricula of the two sorts of school differ little, but the importance attached to them differs considerably; in the Public Schools Latin is more generally taught; but in general the other secondary schools have drawn so much from the example of the Public Schools (as witness the spread of athleticism and institutions of various kinds) that in discussing curriculum the remarks are of general application; to point them at the Public School is nevertheless reasonable, for the Public School can initiate reforms if it will.

If the last century has established social order in the room of social chaos it has done the opposite to the curriculum. Arnold's dogmatic theology was in accord with the clear-cut and coherent classical world to which he limited the studies of the school, and the whole conception, however narrowed, had purpose and vital principle; his garden was formal, if you like, but it was decently arranged, and its false perspectives were harmoniously related; our modern curriculum lacks both unity of purpose and the

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vitality that springs from it; it is the *hortus siccus* of a collectionnaire, and as fair a museum specimen of it as anyone could require may be seen in the School Certificate, an examination that the Public Schools have, most regrettably, accepted—most regrettably, for here is just such an instrument as an increasingly bureaucratic and banausic system of education finds apt to its purpose, the standardisation of thought.

Nothing is easier than to cram boys through the different subjects of the School Certificate with an entire disregard of the educational values of each subject. This is hardly the fault of the examiners in the first place nor of the subjects of examination; it is partly inherent in the mere idea of a generally applicable examination to comprehend several academic subjects. The real villains of the piece are the headmasters who allow " Certificate forms " to exist, well knowing (for they are not fools) that the blandest assurances that results are not measured by certificates will not prevent the master responsible for the form from judging his own efficiency in that way, and who, knowing this to be so, take the certificate form as the standard up to which junior forms work and into which new intelligent boys are drafted. A cramming form may be a necessity, in view of the pathetic belief of the business world in such certificates; but it is criminal to make it the model for the rest. It should exist naked and ashamed on a bad eminence beside the main stream.

Sentimental traditionalism, however, has retained the form master, who was an excellent institution while the restricted range of the curriculum allowed him to take his boys in most subjects, but who is now largely a myth; if the school is organised in this way the tendency is to range forms above and below the School Certificate as X-1, X-2, and so on. Of course, if boys are rated in each subject purely on their ability in that subject they can take the Certificate with a short intensive course in the set books as soon as their different subjects come up to that level. This prevents the far too common absurdity of finding a boy whose ability in two subjects is spoiled by keeping him down in a low form because of his weakness in others; on the other hand it necessitates some authority other than the old form master to watch over the boy's general development. Before considering this question of organisation it will be as well to collate the different problems so far stated.

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We are endeavouring to bridge the gap between childhood and parenthood, dependence and independence, irresponsibility and responsibility; certain mechanisms, the Chapel and the Prefectorial body, and their descendants, the compulsory games and the O.T.C., designed to adapt the boy to Society through his social life in the School, have lost force and application; on the other hand the School microcosm has been civilised, and the relations between boys and masters of the post-war generation are friendly to a degree hitherto unknown. The curriculum has lost unity of purpose in widening its field of application, and dogmatism has moved from the Chapel to the Laboratory.

The first obvious necessity is to find a unifying principle that shall relate life and learning, and there can only be one. This is to seek the truth; Arnold stated his truth; the Renaissance sought it in the past; Socrates and Jesus sought it in the minds and hearts of their fellows; but no living educational force can come to birth without passion for the truth, and it is precisely the absence of this passion that has sterilised our educational system as a whole, and has degraded our scholars to the level of performing animals and our teachers to ringmasters and sheep-tamers. A passion for accuracy produces only pedants.

There is really only one subject in education and that is life itself, and there is only one object of education, to live abundantly. But this splendid and exalted conception, this religion, that has inspired and united every creative movement of thought, has been fribbled away in one or another form of Pharisaism. The chair of my master has become of more importance than French thought and feeling, and good form has replaced goodness. The materials worked upon are treated as so much cloth that may be cut this way or that, à la mode, to conceal our nakedness or ignorance, so that the scholar is lapped in so many mufflers and shawls again the cold breath of reality on his heart, his solar plexus, and his genitals, and in that grotesque robe he cuts a fair enough figure; the sheep are not fed, but wrapped about to hide their leanness.

Yet the circumstances of Public School life are such as to make an education based on truth and the love of truth the most obvious in the world. Can any adult reader cast his mind back and recreate for himself the emotions, half realised, dimly

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apprehended in a hundred impulses, the anxious sense of personal achievement and growing force, that came upon him in puberty, the most intimate revolution and revelation that he was ever to experience? How great was his desire for reassurance, for the certainty that he was only as other men were, and how deep his longing for atonement with humanity; and in that uncertainty of a half-seen visionary future, how naturally he retreated from the newly significant, newly dangerous other sex into the herd of his fellows! It is upon this emotion that our system plays, reinforcing its anxieties by our fumbling evasions and embarrassed silences, though to the boy the two new adventures, his new self and his new school, will be inextricably linked, so that failure to solve the problems of the one will be linked with failure in the other. It is at that stage that we present him, too, to a herd so large that he may well shrink back in the fear that he can never win his way through anything so large. To such a boy the problem of entering the herd remains a permanent problem, for it cannot be solved by a regression to the methods of the nursery. Yet it is our first duty to bring him out of the family into the herd, and our second to bring him through the herd to individuality.

The most comprehensive solution would seem to be to group new boys in gangs of half a dozen or so, each to work during the first term almost entirely with its House Master, a system that would necessitate careful arrangement of entries; this first term would be devoted to the adaptation of the boy to school life, and to introducing him to the conception that education consists in living and in the study of life; this is open to different approaches, and naturally each master would have to be given considerable latitude in his handling of the problem. He would endeavour to ascertain where the boys' abilities and weaknesses lay so that he could draft him at the second term into the appropriate set for each subject that he was to study, but above all he would need to establish confidence in his own honesty, courage, and understanding, for it would be his duty to give the boy confidence in facing his own difficulties, backed by the knowledge that he would secure assistance when he needed it. It is quite obvious that this is no job for the average man in the schools to-day; it is well known, and reflected in the common derision of schoolmasters in such phrases as 'Those who can,

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do, those who can't, teach,' that a high percentage of schoolmasters are merely men who suffer from an inferiority-sense that forbids their competing with their fellows and urges them subconsciously to increase their stature by the master's dais and gown even when competing with children. Such an inferiority sense is commonly linked with a fantastic guilt-sense attached to sexual matters quite without relation to any responsible acts in the past or present, and based on childish experiences. It is worse than useless for such men, whose inferiority-sense may urge them to great industry and whose hunger for power may masquerade as a very plausible sympathy, to deal with the problems of adolescence until they have solved their own; they will only project their own fantasies into their pupils. Ideally, no doubt, such masters as we require should have proved their freedom by life in other spheres than school before appointment; at least they must have been brought to face their own characters; further, they must of course have a good range of subjects.

The House Master will of course continue to supervise his boys' progress after the first term, and he will also share with the Headmaster in what I will call the educational, as opposed to the academic part of the curriculum; for this part the boys would be grouped by psychological age, and it would be constructed to develop along the natural lines to accord with the needs of those ages. Thus in the earliest stages, in the first term and for some time later, competition would be between gangs rather than between individuals, so that the boy can find his individuality through his common activities; if he does not do this he lacks the confidence to compete alone except through childish vanity, or, if it is preferred, out of over-compensation for an inferiority sense. It can hardly be stressed too strongly that most boys who wish to stress their individuality at this age are over-compensating; their claim to be free of the herd arises from fear that it will destroy a fantasy picture of themselves in which they are unique as one can only be in the eyes of one's mother; they are tied to their mothers, and hence their cry for freedom and sympathy, for it is the slave who talks of liberty, the free man is not aware of it. Certain sorts of work are peculiarly suited to group handling, and specially those which require contributions from different subjects; naturally they want thinking out, but half a

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dozen men of intelligence and with clear ideas of their purpose could find plenty of material to employ several branches of the curriculum together, with full use of local advantages for historical matter, etc. Again, the intense preoccupation of the adolescent with the physical would be used; naturally boys, whose minds are very concrete, rate growth chiefly in physical terms, and growth is their main business in life; if you ask small boys what they mean by the phrase the " average man " the most common feature of their answers is that they give figures for height and weight. At present the most characteristic thing about our approach to science is that we begin by Inorganic Chemistry. A better approach would be by Biology, and an even better by Physiology, for the boy is absorbed in the problem of his own bodily growth; Biology seems to have been chosen by some because of its sexual value, which no doubt is great, but I think that a healthier approach would be more general, for most boys are as interested in their stomachs and their muscles as in anything sexual; to put it crudely, they like to see the works, and probably this would be a more direct and simple approach to the whole question of life, bearing too on general questions of health, than any other.

The later developments from this firm basis of self-realisation to the more abstract and ethical need hardly be sketched; from the " works " of the body to its " communications " in the nervous system and so to the whole question of thought and feeling is an obvious transference. From the gang to the gang-leader is equally so, and thence to a wider view of the whole question of conduct considered impersonally. Moreover, in this method of development we should merely be copying the story of racial development, and we have ready to hand in the institutions, religions, and people of the past ample material to suggest subject matter for use as illustration or inspiration. Nor need it be supposed that all this will seem extraordinary to the boy when he encounters it; he comes at an age when he is ripe for change and adventure, for widening horizons, and he expects his Public School to be different from his prep. school; he feels that he is, and in fact he is, a new person. That is why the first term is of such paramount importance, for he will either advance joyfully to assault the unknown or he will retreat from it; and he has

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two unknowns, his new self and his new environment, failure to deal with either of which will lead to failure with the other. So the work of the first term is to relate the two to the idea of successful growth. How often this is not done is shown by any anthology of Public School verse, in which one will find a preponderance of compensatory fantasy, whether of the rebel or the martyr pose. Such attitudes are not creative, for they are self-regarding; they do not spring from the impartial direction of the whole integrated man towards any object, but are the symbols of inward strife.

Throughout the object must be to show the boy that he is seeking the truth, and that his teachers do not fear the truth. In this a very big part will be played by the handling of his written English, which must come to be viewed as an expression of himself; if the boy writes a story he is in some way or another its hero; it cannot but be part of him; and in this way he soon gives an indication of his mentality and psyche; but there is more that can be done, apart from this, for nothing could be more significant than such things as failure to distinguish between " if " and " but," " I want " and " I will," when they are real habits of mind, and nothing could be more significant than the different pictures that boys will attach to such phrases as " power," " enterprise " and the like, all of which are things easily prepared for and observed in handling the general question of writing. This is all work for the first term, during which the master is in close enough contact to relate these observed traits to action; it can all be done very easily and naturally once the master is not scared of facing facts, when the boy will be ready enough to be absolutely frank and to be himself; of course the master's difficulty will be to see where the roots of a trouble lie at first, but he will find that the boy's mind has a directness that takes him there very quickly, and it is not difficult to show him how false associations between ideas and emotions lead to courses of action, or how his expression of ideas depends on his attitude to life in general, and how that attitude rests on his earlier life. This, he can feel, is truth in a real form, and one that means growth and progress; it relates thought to life, and when it is attached to the rest of the curriculum, as it obviously can be—witness the whole question of languages—there can be no question that the

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curriculum will appear in a new light. The advantages of such personal matters being touched by the routine of the first term is obvious; if you endeavoured to reassociate the ideas and emotions of only those who had obvious inferiority complexes, many as they are, the particularisation would only feed the complex. With the whole matter handled in the course of routine there is hardly any need to make use of psychological terms that can only be perplexing, and the adjustments can take place without the boy's realising that anything has happened.

Presumably there are those who fear that any handling of the truth leads to licentiousness; it is a view revealing a pitiful lack of faith in the eager spirit of youth that makes any such professor quite unworthy of the opportunity to wreck it. It is a belief that might have had more substance until masters and boys lived on such friendly terms as they do now, and it must be realised that the consequence of a first term that brought a boy so closely into contact with his house master would be a much closer relation than now exists; moreover we should have eliminated the master whose power complexes take the form of a dominating sympathy. In such a society the idea of gross and extensive licence is merely ludicrous. There is more substance in the criticism that the organisation would present difficulties, but they are by no means insuperable, and it is rather the value of finding a unifying principle than the local application that matters. To those who object that the early stages of the process are entirely self-regarding, it is necessary to reply that the boy of fourteen is not capable of being more obsessed than he is with the new problems of his own growth, which are really the first things to make him think seriously, for they are problems demanding a private moral code as opposed to the childish acceptance of what he is told to do; the prohibitions and stimuli of childhood relate to overt acts, but the new world of the adolescent has to be lived alone, and it is the school's job to assist him to do this; unless it succeeds he is certainly no person to have children of his own, for he will merely marry a mother-substitute and will be unable to inspire his own children with the virile confidence of independence.

No doubt these ideas will meet with little favour in the scholastic profession, for whose earnestness, complexes or no

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complexes, one has respect. That cannot be helped. There is not a lack of young men who think roughly on these lines. Perhaps the bitterest pill to the preachers will be the statement that egocentricity is right for the boy of fourteen, and that he must grow to altruism; Arnold, at least, realised the fact, for though he held out the ultimate ideal of the Christian gentleman he taught from pre-Christian history and ethics; you cannot be a gentleman until you are a man.

The chief weakness of our system as a whole is that it does not so much help as retard growth; it relates social prestige to physique, and its athletic ideal is not of permanent value, for nothing is worse than the athlete run to seed through absence of the strenuous activities of his school-days; it sets a premium upon compensation for the inferiority complex by encouraging academic success as a compensation for lack of self-respect. Such compensatory successes give us the scholars who flee reality; our presentation of learning is of an abstract and unreal world, flight to which is an obvious escape from what is felt to be real, but unpleasant—it may be an organ-inferiority, or it may have more intellectual roots and be described merely as a sense of inadequacy.

The errand-boy of seventeen who left school at fourteen is a better man than the undergraduate of twenty; he has been forced by circumstances to face the realities of his own nature and to realise what the specific functions of manhood are. Our conservatory tends to conserve childishness; for those who are fortunate enough to be nursed into the world the kill or cure process is not necessary, but we must admit the coarseness of adolescence with its Elizabethan vigour and fertility if we are to toughen the moral fibres and gain strength of character; refinement is a process applied to crude and coarse materials. The first step is to eliminate the mother-fixated schoolmaster; the second is to work out the possibilities of each individual school so that its life shall be a progressive revelation of the art of living, in which the intellect shall play its part as the frank servant of truth, and the curriculum show the way to a fuller life. Such a system cannot be built on negations or evasions; it must be affirmative, positive, and relatable to emotional and mental experience.

Genius, the creative mind, does not consist in abnormality of

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nature; the creative mind is centred as others are, but has a more comprehensive radius; what others apprehend dimly as touching the edge of their consciousness emotionally, the genius comprehends and can integrate with the rest of himself. Hence the universality of genius, by contrast to the particularity of the false individuality that is over-compensation—in which category much commonly called poetic must fall. Such apparently individual views are only unique in the eccentricity of their author; they state no more than any man knows, but distort it, and their interest is pathological.

Wholeness, by contrast with sickness, integrity by contrast with duplicity, are processes of perfection, that is, of growth; they cannot be acquired as personal properties, but must be cultivated. And this is not merely a matter of rational comprehension, for to believe in the truth of anything we must perceive it emotionally, especially if it concerns our own natures. It is not only foolish to set a reasoned system of prohibitions against unrelated emotional urges, it sets up a conflict between heart and head that leads to duplicity, and to the abandonment of thought for sensuality on the one hand, or the endeavour to live in the head alone on the other, that is unstable and untrue, that does not express the whole man as an individual, but lets first this side, then that seize control; this is the instability of the child, and it lacks the concentration of purpose required for any serious adult life.

I have purposely refrained from discussing the later applications of the main principle, partly because to go into the details would necessarily be lengthy, partly because any such endeavour to sketch a detailed system could only have local interest; it seems to be obvious that the applications of the principle must vary with conditions of staff, academic curriculum, and environment. This is particularly true of the phase towards the end of the school age when the boy emerges from his homosexuality and becomes heterosexual. But to embark upon this or the many other aspects of our problem would lead to interminable discussion, and they must be left to the reader's imagination; the first phase is the really important one. I shall be content if I have urged anyone to question the soundness of any system of education that does not consciously seek the truth

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and that does not satisfy its pupils that it does so: that question granted as legitimate and justifiable, I do not see what we can do but follow the natural lines of the boy's questioning spirit and seek to attach our curriculum to his real interests. He will work hard enough at the most tedious labours that have a discoverable purpose.

From time to time social forces make educational revolutions inevitable, as when Arnold seized his opportunity and in his moral reformation of the Public School produced the moral reformers that the Middle Class, coming to power, needed for its reformation of society; this was the opportunity created by the fall of the ancien régime and the Industrial Revolution. A comparable change has occurred since the War shattered the Edwardian society. The class from which the Public Schools are recruited is no longer really a middle class as the disappearance of Liberalism testifies; it has gained economic security and a place with the rulers, and with this has come the possibility of independence, which is the virtue of aristocracy; the specifically bourgeois virtues of complaisance, safety, the golden mean, are not really adequate to the children of more emancipated parents, nor are they adequate to the part those children should play later as enlightened citizens; a stronger, freer-minded aristocracy is needed, and unless the Public School creates it it will deservedly die of atrophy, for it must justify the social privileges gained in the past by present function. The alternative is the complete subordination of our educational system to bureaucratic control, with all that is implied by mass-production and the exaltation of certificates and diplomas to be pursued most successfully by those compensating for inadequacy to any real test of virtue.

That virtue is the real object which justifies this expensive form of education is a truism; it cannot be conferred by the guinea stamp of the most famous school, but must be mined for in the clay of the pupil himself, and the implement must be his own mind and spirit as tempered by his earlier life. It is for us to examine the weapon, and to hearten the digger; it cannot be done without calling a spade a spade.

MARTIN CRUSOE.

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RELEASE

I have ransacked drawer and cupboard
To find the instrument I put away:
Memories hang upon its stops—I am afraid
The notes I waken will betray
Old testaments I sealed and signed. I fear
The winding stair of fugue will lead me to
Those places where the mind impels a stay:
To windows where the blinds are drawn,
Not without caution to be raised again.
I would prevent emotions in the brain,
Once vital, fading to an undertone
Whose dull recurrence wears the sense's edge,
As thunder rumoured on a sultry day.
And there are chords I shun lest they recall
Things which the mind would rivet to:
Some wallflowers on a crumbling wall,
And their soft smell. And to the inner sense
I would deny the rhythmic swing and fall
Of waves that gather in a Summer bay.
And to the hidden mouth the blown salt spray,
Felt as a boat steers to the deeper sea.

In contradiction, it is best to bind
The sense for freedom; not to give much scope
To retrogression, lest the biassed mind
Turn inward on itself. The mill-wheels grind
The life-charged grain to whitest flour.
I would not have life whittled to an hour
Of sifted essence, and all memories creep
Round one small orbit, while the visual power
Becomes not means to gain, but keep.
Better to leave all legacy behind,
Than sign acceptance in the terms of sleep.

C. H. PEACOCK.

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THE ART-FORM OF DEMOCRACY?

IT was not until after the War that the cinema began to be seriously considered as a means of artistic expression. Only a few people saw any æsthetic possibilities in the early American and French two-reel comedies, tragedies and dramas. It was left to the serious Germans to elevate this new popular entertainment to the level of 'art.' *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari,* made in 1919, was the first film to interest intelligent people in any large numbers in the potentialities of this new and crude medium.

This was thirteeen years ago. Since then the cinema has made vast technical strides, and produced a number of remarkable personalities. In 1928 the industry was beginning to discover its technical limitations and possibilities; it stood on the threshold of its own methods. The Russian proletarian cinema, notably under Eisenstein and Pudovkin, had carried it forward to a state of technical perfection. Then a hundred per cent. talking, singing and dancing monstrosity turned the whole industry topsy-turvy, and it found itself almost where it had begun.

From this blow, it has in four crowded years rallied with an encouraging speed; the additional techniques of sound are being assimilated with a gratifying success by a few accomplished technicians. The principles of sound technique are beginning, in actual films as opposed to theory, to outline themselves, if faintly as yet.

But sound, even if it has increased the potentialities of the cinema, has also made it doubly potent as an anaesthetic: the personifications of the day-dreams of shop-girl and bank-clerk are more thrillingly 'real' when one can hear as well as see them, and a whole new galaxy has arisen to replace those unfortunates whose voices were too destructive of illusion.

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But how is the fastidious minority to regard this curious and intricate phenomenon, the cinema? Certainly it is impossible to disregard it sociologically. It is equally impossible to follow the advanced critics and talk of Eisenstein and Pudovkin as second Shakespeares and Leonardos. Occasionally a film is shown that is stimulating, but more often than not the ' good ' turns out to be merely unpopular, ' incomprehensible,' ' highbrow,' or forbidden public showing. (Even Chaplin's latest film is, as far as I can gather from casual conversation with a varied collection of people, ' a lot of rot.') But the great popular successes, such as *Ben Hur* and *Disraeli,* are to most intelligent people a source of embarassment. The cinema is the art-form of ' democracy ' (the inverted commas are to admit that it might equally be called the art-form of capitalism).

We should, most of us, I imagine, like to see such films as (to take a representative handful) *Ben Hur, Our Dancing Daughters, Cuban Love Song, The Big Parade, Secrets of a Secretary,* banished from the screen, not by the action of a censor, but by lack of public support. But it would be unreasonable to hope for a cinema beyond the intelligence of the general public. The Russian films, Chaplin, and René Clair represent the highest level of the popular cinema, and it is a level sufficiently high to give us excuse for optimism. They may all be appreciated for quite wrong reasons, but that they are appreciated at all is hopeful, and a public which supports *City Lights, Le Million,* and *A Nous La Liberté* will perhaps soon demand a generally higher level than they have been given up to date.

The cinema is unlikely ever to reach the level of the best literature (for reasons which I have explained elsewhere), and will never satisfy the most exacting demands of the minority. It must always remain to some extent popular and democratic, and on a lower level than its contemporary art-forms. In any case the ' popular ' work of Clair or Chaplin is truer cinema and a finer synthesis of experience than the ' advanced ' work of Bunuel or Dulac. Popularity does not necessarily (though it does almost more often than not) mean mediocrity.

With these reservations, then, we may say that a number of films are produced each year which justify an interest in the technical aspect of the cinema, and a smaller number of films

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that justify one's belief that the cinema is an art-medium out of which serious and successful records of human experience have already emerged, and out of which in the future something finer will come.

We may divide the entire output of the international cinema into two very broad sections, though each is capable of numerous sub-divisions. The first, comprising the vast majority of films, contains those which appear, have their short life, and vanish; the second, of more particular interest, contains films which represent technical innovations of importance or are for various other reasons capable of exciting the intelligent person's interest, and on rare occasions can be recognised as the attempt of a serious artist to express himself.

Two films have recently been shown in England which will enable me to illustrate and bring home some of my points in a necessarily brief space.

* * *

Five Star Final is an attack on tabloid journalism. Technically it is much like other American films—it is only inside the newspaper office that the film is at all considerable—crude, competent and second-rate, in short, a good typical example of our democratic art-form.

But it attacks journalism; that is in itself notable. Anything critical emerging from Hollywood is an achievement, and an exposure of so huge a vested interest as journalism through a medium as like journalism as the cinema is positively miraculous. Of course it only exposes the cruder and more obvious vices that journalism is subject to. (Thus, the ' respectable ' Press can hail it as ' the film of the year '; a real exposure of popular journalism would be much less complacently received, or disposed of by that most effective weapon—disregard). The film could be commercially produced and receive the Press publicity which alone made it a commercial proposition, only because it deals with the material and less insidious kind of ' corruption.' The Press, we all feel, needs attacking in a different way; but if (assuming it capable) the cinema attempted this, the film would be incomprehensible to the great majority. It would reach only those who need no enlightenment, and would serve no useful purpose.

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We find ourselves therefore in the paradoxical position of having to assert that a film because it is crude and superficial is 'good' which, if it had been more sensitively and intelligently handled, would have had its efficacy destroyed. The cinema can hope to transcend this dilemma not by withdrawing to æsthetic sophistication but only by appealing, as the best directors have in fact appealed, at a number of response-levels. (The essence of Chaplin will always elude the bulk of his audiences). So Shakespeare and the more notable Elizabethan dramatists solved the same kind of problem.

The most *Five Star Final* can hope to do is to sow suspicions of the popular Press (if the audience doesn't reflect: 'This is perhaps true of American journalism but not of English.') This no doubt will make in a sense for sweetness and light; and so much—and little more—may be claimed for a film so highly rated as *Kameradschaft*. And this function begins to look important when we reflect that the Press has, by its more attractive lay-out and its literary gossip, its snappy articles and serial stories, all immediately assimilable, 'superseded' for the great majority all but the crudest books and all printed criticism outside its own pages. But all this has nothing to do with art.

* * *

Westfront 1918 is of a very different quality from *Five Star Final*. It is the best of the numerous war films (and probably the last). Again we have the situation outlined in the previous paragraph. A public opinion hostile to war could have been created and fixed by the multitudinous war novels—if they had been read by the masses. But, 'unpleasant' and requiring the imaginative co-operation of the reader, they scarcely reached the public whose immunity against stampeding can alone secure us from war. The thrilling 'reality' of the cinema which generally subserves a narcotic effect has in *Westfront* an opposite function. Most war-films set out (more or less openly) to arouse the bellicose instinct of the man in the street and provide romantic glorification of war (*Hell's Angels*) and of nationalism (*The Big Parade, Verdun, Tell England,* etc.) The exceptions are unfortunately those (e.g. *The End of St. Petersburg*) which are the least widely shown. Pabst has employed the peculiar capacities

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of his medium to create a complete illusion of the battle-field, and cannot be accused of any of the vices just described. Yet, accomplished as is the ' art ' of this most remarkable of the West European directors, we must not allow the ambiguity of the term, ' art,' to confuse our sense of values. No film yet produced can justify the serious critical approach demanded (for instance) by a good novel or poem. This needs saying firmly, since the cult of 'Cinema' by intellectuals, English, French and American, shows how insidious may be the forms of *la trahison des clercs*. Thus we find in the ***Hound and Horn*** a solemn appreciation of Mickey Mouse and the animated cartoon vulgarities.

It remains for Mr. Delisle Burns or someone else with Faith in Democracy to retort by reminding us that *Quem quaeritis* led to *Lear*.

WILLIAM HUNTER.

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COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

'SELECTED LIST OF SPRING BOOKS.'

Under this head the *New Statesman and Nation* (Spring Book Supplement, March 12th, 1932) prints a pathetic little note: 'These lists make no attempt to be exhaustive. No one who has not attempted the task can imagine how invidious a business it is to read so many catalogues, and try to choose those books which are important in themselves, and likely to have a particular appeal to one's readers.' The selected list which follows contains 618 titles, of which 148 are 'fiction.' Under such a spate it is clear that something different from the traditional methods of reviewing must be adopted if readers are not to waste their time sorting out the tenth rate for themselves. It is only possible to know whether a reviewer's praise or blame has any meaning if the journal for which he writes has ascertainable standards of criticism. It is interesting to speculate how many good reviews have been prejudiced in the mind of the discerning reader because of the non-critical matter with which they were surrounded.

THE STATE OF REVIEWING

Mr. R. Ellis Roberts contributed to *The New Statesman and Nation* for March 26th, 1932, *An Open Letter to Frank Swinnerton*. Mr. Swinnerton had been complaining about the state of reviewing. Coterie? exclaims Mr. Roberts with ingenuous surprise: 'I became literary editor of the *New Statesman* at the beginning of 1930, and honestly I can only just understand what you mean by the sentences I have quoted.' Whatever Mr. Swinnerton may have meant, Mr. Roberts in his reply gives away the essential case. Answering the suggestion that reviewing has deteriorated: 'Are you sure that the *News Chronicle*, to name only one, is so much inferior? I seem to have read criticisms, there, not only by Robert Lynd, but by E. M. Forster, Rose Macaulay, E. E. Kellett,

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D. C. Somervell, H. C. Wylde, Sylvia Lynd, Phillip Guedalla, Winifred Holtby, and Charles Williams.' Mr. Roberts assumes, with justice or otherwise, that Mr. Swinnerton, and, certainly with justice, that the majority of readers of the *New Statesman,* will be impressed by this list. What more need be said about the state of reviewing? Mr. E. M. Forster we know as a distinguished novelist; but of the rest, of how many can anything be said except that they are authorities like Mr. Roberts? And yet Mr. Roberts can safely refer to them as authorities like himself. Here we have the top level in contemporary critical journalism. They and their friends control the more intelligent weeklies. Coterie or no coterie, they exhibit the kind of solidarity innocently exemplified by Mr. Roberts' letter. They are no doubt without personal malice (most of them). But towards anything that, explicitly or implicitly, challenges their standards or their competence they inevitably exhibit something that looks like malice (solidarity, of course, makes it something else: they stand for Good Taste, Good Sense and Right Reason).

Mr. Robert Lynd, perhaps the most eminent of them, is, to do him justice, so sure of his judicial authority that he can generally command good humour. Here we have him, ten years ago, on *The Sacred Wood :* ' Mr. Eliot fails as a critic, because he brings us neither light nor delight. But this does not mean that he will always fail. He has some of the qualities that go to the making of a critic. . . . '

It was Mr. Lynd who anticipated Mr. J. B. Priestley's discovery of a modern Donne in Mr. J. C. Squire: ' Like Donne, he is largely self-occupied, examining the horrors of his own soul, overloaded at times with thought, an intellect at odds with the spirit. . . .'

But his taste is catholic, or rather, democratic, in its range, and his activity untiring. In the *Observer* for April 3rd we read: ' Mr. Robert Lynd has edited for Harraps a new omnibus volume called *Great Love Stories of All Nations.* Mr. Lynd, like Elia, is an immortal disinfectant. Nothing false or septic can endure his neighbourhood. We can be certain, then, that nothing he has decided to include will be unworthy. . . .'

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THE B.B.C. QUESTIONNAIRE caused some strange reactions. We do not altogether agree with Sir William Beveridge's methods, but the kind of opposition encountered is significant. Under the heading ' The B.B.C. Wants to Know About You and Your Wife ' (January 28th, 1932) the *Daily Mail* made merry, after its fashion, with the whole idea. Those who wish for evidence about the interests concerned in remaining ignorant about ourselves may turn to the articles in the *Daily Mail* about this date, where the questions are proclaimed as ' impertinent inquiries into the private affairs ' of the British people. There are savage tribes, we remember, who so regard questions concerning their names or those of their relations. Surveys are dangerous. ' The unusually heavy rains which happened to follow the English survey of the Nicobar Islands in the winter of 1886-1887 were imputed by the alarmed natives to the wrath of the spirits at the theodolites, dumpy-levellers, and other strange instruments which had been set up in many of their favourite haunts; and some of them proposed to soothe the anger of the spirits by sacrificing a pig.'— *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul,* p. 231.

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A MIDDLEMAN OF IDEAS

THE NEMESIS OF AMERICAN BUSINESS (Allen and Unwin, 7/6d.).

THE TRAGEDY OF WASTE (Macmillan $1.50).

MEN AND MACHINES (Jonathan Cape, 1929, 12/6d.).

MEXICO (The Bodley Head, 1932, 12/6d.).

The work of Stuart Chase, even his name, is scarcely known in England. The kind of awareness he represents is significantly absent from the contemporary intelligence on this side of the Atlantic. This does not mean that our culture is healthier; it is merely that our educated class is more complacent and blind.

The books by Stuart Chase, listed above, are devoted to answering questions raised by the work of economists, statisticians, sociologists, industrial experts, and the drift of the modern world generally, questions which, in our innocence (if Mr. Wells is our spokesman), we have scarcely thought of asking over here. In *Men and Machines,* for example, there is an examination of the history of the machine in world civilization and a carefully substantiated discussion of its place in the modern community. All the available evidence is summarised that bears upon such basic questions as:

How far are we ' slaves ' to machinery?

What exactly are the effects (if any) of different kinds of machine-tending on the worker?

Is the efficiency of machine work greater than that of hand work?

Has machinery (and the complicated apparatus of living it has brought with it) produced a more satisfactory life for the individual?

What are the disadvantages and dangers of a machine civilization?

How can the machine be used to produce the maximum human happiness?

The author has no cultural axe to grind—he is inclined to all-round scepticism and would frankly like the showing to turn out in favour of the machine civilization for which he makes out so instructive a profit-and-loss account—but he suppresses nothing, he colours nothing, and he is never less than penetrating and

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racily informative. At his best he exhibits the kind of percipience the absence of which renders futile such undertakings as *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind;* he is explicitly dealing with the practical issues raised by the use of the machine—' I am not so much concerned with the character of a shipping clerk with a line of wise cracks and a Chevrolet as I am about his ignorance of the environment which furnishes him food and shelter '—but his method, subtler, defter and less pretentious than Mr. Wells's, obliges him to penetrate behind the imposing façade of Progress and note the drastic changes in work habits and play habits effected in the last generation, to observe ' the aesthetic account against the machine,' and the outward evidences of a breach of cultural continuity:

' Compare the Hoe printing press—that diabolic modern marvel—with the primitive hand press of Caxton. Merciful Heaven, what a gain! Then compare its flimsy, fading output with the sturdy folios which have come down the centuries. Merciful Heaven, what a loss! Here is a Foudrinier machine with perfect co-ordination, turning out five miles of paper in one spasm, at a speed greater than a man can walk. What is the function of this triumph of engineering? " To produce the worst paper that has ever been made, or that it is possible to make " . . . . With the decline of handicraft in certain fields, a standard by which the factory article can be judged no longer exists. . . . The more he (the householder) reads, the more illiterate he becomes. . . . He stands goggle-eyed before a thousand advertising campaigns pulling him in as many directions. The sense of quality, durability, value, which was strong in his less lettered grandfather, has well-nigh evaporated from his more lettered self.'

Such conclusions are not present to disturb the reader of *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind;* they do not come within Mr. Wells's ken, for one thing because he is not, in all his 825 pages, near enough to the facts at any point. The Wellsian display of vast stores of information is merely display; in *Men and Machines* there is evident a sharp, disinterested intelligence at work on data with which it is at home, selecting the significant from the trivial. Mr. Chase, far from surrendering to the dazzling achievements of industrialism, is anxious to bring home to us

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its great dangers—' mechanised warfare, technological tenuousness, and the mounting drain upon natural resources.' He discusses the terrifying complexity of the physical organization of the modern city, with its complete absence of ' a central intelligence to nurse it through a nervous breakdown.' ' All previous cultures,' he points out, ' have got along with hardly any central nervous system at all; they could only be destroyed village by village. . . . Our connection with the realities of our environment is far more tenuous than was ever the case in Imperial Rome.' And he speculates what adequate insurance against a metropolitan calamity would entail; he recommends, in default of a distributed population, ' special educational courses for the entire population. . . . a sort of general civic mobilization.'[1]

It is impossible in a brief review to do justice to any one of Mr. Chase's exciting books, and I should prefer in any case to discuss him as a phenomenon. The scientist who, after surveying *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* can conclude coolly: ' We are all cluttered up with progress,' is evidently not of Mr. Wells's kind and stands, one may hope, for the new order. It is not that any strikingly new data is advanced in his books, but that he conveys the specialists' conclusions to the layman. He is in short a first-class educational publicist. Take for instance *Mexico*, his latest book, where he makes use of two famous sociological surveys, *Tepoztlan* (made in 1930 of a large Mexican village forming part of a small economic region with a handicraft culture) and *Middletown* (the type-city of the Middle-West), in addition to six-months' first-hand study on the spot. Here we really have a very detailed and yet a fascinatingly interesting comparison between two opposite ways of living, and the effect of Tepoztlan's contact with Middletown is duly charted. The value of such a middleman of ideas in our present state of ignorance and muddle is inestimable. The work of specialists is apt to be unassimilable by the general reader (*Middletown* alone runs to 550 large pages) yet the ordinary cultured man demands and requires to be kept in touch.

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[1]Another aspect of ' technological tenuousness ' is suggested by Malaparte's *La Technique du Coup d'Etat* (translated Paris, 1931).

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Qualified and trustworthy middlemen are rare. Mr. Chase is an American, and whom have we in England to serve this function? The obvious criticism of our scientific publicists is that they are not educated in the important sense, and in this respect the younger generation shows little signs of improvement. Professor Julian Huxley is not so obviously crude as his collaborator, Mr. H. G. Wells, but what else is there to be said for him? *Africa View* contains nothing to give a single jolt to the *Punch*-reading public. Literary-philosophic middlemen in this country are apt to be distinctly bogus (*The Criterion* harbours not a few), and while in France they are both livelier and more authentic, they are also, as Frenchmen, faced by a situation so much less complex that they are of little use to us. In one field we have the shining exception of Sir Norman Angell, to whom we pay no attention—his best book, *The Press and the Organization of Society,* has long been out of print.

Why have we no Stuart Chase over here? I can best suggest the answer by referring to another of his activities—Consumers' Research, Ltd., which has built laboratories where a disinterested band of specialists employs every kind of test to every kind of commodity and issues frequent bulletins on competing brands of goods, informing members of their findings. These findings are not merely material. The bulletins contain also articles exposing the arts of modern advertising and high-pressure salesmanship, designed to promote ' sales resistance.' No doubt a civilization is in a bad way when it has to educate its citizens into not being at the mercy of its industrial system. But it is in a worse when it lacks even the recognition of its need. This is perhaps the measure of the difference between the U.S.A. and Great Britain: further along the road we are travelling, they have produced a conscious counter-movement. The services of such a movement need extending: we require instruction how to resist not merely that powerful combination, Big Business plus copywriter, but also the more sinister allies of Big Business—the newspaper, the magazine, the film, the best-seller, even more subtle enemies of national decency and spiritual fineness than the advertiser is of our pockets and our health. Again, *The New Republic* exerts itself to perform these offices as no cis-Atlantic periodical, and yet a conscious recognition of purpose other than political

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would do much to remedy the anæmic futility of our critical weeklies. England will have to produce a few assorted middlemen of Stuart Chase calibre—say, as a start, an economist, a sociologist, a handful of scientists and some University teachers in the Humanities, as well as some one in a strategic position in the journalistic field—before our attitude to the cultural situation can be said to be a wholesome one.

What is to prevent it? Well, it is not altogether unreasonable to assert the existence of a spirit hostile to such activities in the only class in England that could sponsor them. The spirit, of course, which considers it bad form to take such issues seriously. The genteel tradition of the academic world, from which the educated middle-class takes its tone, has no place for Mr. Chase. It would cut him instinctively, beautifully unaware that the chief excuse for an academic order is that it should produce an intellectual climate in which sensitive curiosity and intelligence can flourish.

Q. D. LEAVIS.

HOW HIGH IS THE HIGHER EDUCATION?

Dr. Abraham Flexner's *Universities,*[1] an expansion of his Rhodes Lectures given in 1928, enjoyed a scandalous success among the professors in America. He had revealed, it is true, follies and hypocrisies in university administration in the States which members of the teaching profession were acutely aware of, though quite helpless to amend. But the circumstantial directness of his attack was heartening if its revelations were not altogether novel. The presidents and trustees whose shoddy educational ideals he justly questioned have not made public confession in a white gown, though the chief evil-doer, in Dr. Flexner's eyes, President Butler of Columbia, made a covert rejoiner while seeming to talk about something else. The American Press was bewildered. They perhaps mistook Dr. Flexner for a disciple of Mencken,

[1] *UNIVERSITIES: AMERICAN, ENGLISH AND GERMAN.* Abraham Flexner (Oxford, 16/-).

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and the reporters never know where to have Mencken. In the turmoil of the moment when state legislatures are cutting the universities off with a dollar and private institutions are boarding up their shiny new buildings, the book has been quickly forgotten.

I have no idea how it made its way in England. I imagine that a frank and informed exposition of the defects of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London by an American administrator would not be received by the reviewers with unconfined enthusiasm. Very few English university men, as far as I can discover, have ever had it in their hands.

It is regrettable that indifference in England and gunshyness in America have deprived Dr. Flexner of the controversy his book should have produced. Valuable as it is for its documentation and the relentless impartiality of its judgments, it is a dangerous book, dangerous not only because its doctrine is decidedly open to question but because it seems at first glance to demand our complete assent.

Dr. Flexner listened with delight in his youth to the surge and thunder of the seminars at Johns Hopkins, the most German of American universities. He has built a solid bridge across the chaos of American medical education, and as the influential officer of a great educational foundation he has helped to burn out of American universities the bunkum he so hilariously describes. These admirable qualifications for writing such a book have, however, given a curious bias to his understanding of the whole business of learning and teaching. In spite of his zeal to be fair to what must be called, I suppose, the humanities, he has little idea of the traditional ' goods ' of humanistic study. His idea of a university must seem to many an idea which is not universally applicable. The attempt to force it everywhere would certainly destroy a particular quality in English and American life which is properly regarded as valuable and necessary.

Universities exist, Dr. Flexner believes, to search for truth. ' The university professor has an entirely objective responsibility to learning, to his subject, and not a psychological or parental responsibility to his students.' The end-all of university training is the development of the student's ability to ' attack a piece of research.' The intensive study of phenomena under the most favourable conditions is the university's most important function.

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No sweeter or more significant words, he believes, were ever uttered by man than Jacques Loeb's immortal ' I am a student of problems.' These words suggest Dr. Flexner's ideal: a vast army of God's spies with its non-coms. and its field-marshals. The graduate seminar recruits and trains and passes on the new subalterns to the research institutes, the officers' mess of this scientific army.

We are familiar with the creed of the scientist and we have no desire to prevent him from using it for family prayers in the laboratory. In America certainly and in some English colleges it might with benefit be a more prominent article of faith. But is it true, as Dr. Flexner says with a sweeping gesture, that the university has no responsibilty to the individual?[1] To him the humanities are to be encouraged because new discoveries yet to be made in them may lead to new evaluations. He would not admit that the end of such study is the transformation of the individual himself, by the heightening of his perceptions and the quickening of his ability to penetrate the consciousness of men and the temper of periods both near him and remote from him in time. The scientist is not concerned with the result to himself of the work he does. He cannot understand the selfishness of the humanist who prefers the particular truth which he has discovered to be most harmonious with himself to the average truth which may possess enough general sanction to be called an hypothesis or a law. Loeb's vision of the world as a pleasant succession of problems to be mowed down one after the other is a queer paradise to offer a poet. And are the poets to be sent to special trade schools—those technical schools which Dr. Flexner offers as consolation to men who are not spartan enough to sell all their aesthetic goods and devote themselves to the search for truth? Was Virgil a 'problem ' to Petrarch and was Petrarch a ' problem ' to Chaucer?

The lunatic modern world, Dr. Flexner insists, needs specialists and has no money to waste in training at the universities men who are content with half-knowledge. No one wishes to contradict him. We are learning in America that congressmen whose only qualification for office is a degree of expertness at hitting the

[1]He begs the question when he writes *parental* responsibility.

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spittoon at forty paces take very little interest in a balanced budget. Mr. Hoover's autocratically appointed commissions might more safely be entrusted with the country's welfare. But the supply of trained intelligence available in England and America does not depend on the official exclusiveness of the university seminars in these countries. No system can create intelligence and there is no economy in supplying forty seminars where there are only ten first-rate minds to use them.

Are the colleges to be emptied of the others who, though they are by no means geniuses, wish to associate themselves with the most advanced thought of their time and intend to make what practical use of it in their lives they can? One might suppose—since the prow of modern democracy is pointed toward communism—that as many men as have a remote chance of taking the longitude of our present position ought to be allowed to listen to the best navigators.

WILLARD THORP.

BIOLOGY AND MR. HUXLEY

BRAVE NEW WORLD by Aldous Huxley (Chatto and Windus, 7/6d.).

'Utopias' writes Prof. Berdiaev, in a passage which Mr. Huxley chooses for his motto 'appear to be much more realisable than we used to think. We are finding ourselves face to face with a far more awful question, how can we avoid their actualisation? For they can be made actual. Life is marching towards them. And perhaps a new period is beginning, a period when intelligent men will be wondering how they can avoid these utopias, and return to a society non-utopian, less perfect, but more free.' Mr. Huxley's book is indeed a brilliant commentary on this dismally true remark. It is as if a number of passages from Mr. Bertrand Russell's recent book *The Scientific Outlook* had burst into flower, and had rearranged themselves in patches of shining colour like man-eating orchids in a tropical forest. Paul planted, Apollos watered, but who gave the increase in this case, we may well ask, for a more diabolical picture of society (as some would say) can never have been painted.

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Mr. Huxley's theme, embellished though it is by every artifice of that ingenuity of which he is master, is primarily dual, one of its aspects being the power of autocratic dictatorship, and the other, the possibilities of this power when given the resources of a really advanced biological engineering. The book opens with a long description of a human embryo factory, where the eggs emitted by carefully tended ovaries, are brought up in the way they should go by mass-production methods on an endless conveyor belt moving very slowly until at last the infants are ' decanted ' one by one into a highly civilised world. The methods of education by continual suggestion and all the possibilities of conditional reflexes are brilliantly described, and we are shown a world where art and religion no longer exist, but in which an *absolutely* stable form of society has been achieved, firstly, by sorting out the eggs into groups of known inherited characteristics and then setting each group, when adult, to do the work for which it is fitted, and secondly by allowing ' unlimited copulation ' (sterile, of course) and unlimited sexual gratification of every kind. Here Mr. Huxley, whether consciously or not, has incorporated the views of many psychologists, e.g. Dr. Money Kyrle. In an extremely interesting paper[1] Dr. Kyrle has suggested that social discontent, which has always been the driving force in social change, is a manifestation of the Œdipus complexes of the members of society, and cannot be removed by economic means. With decrease of sexual taboos, these psychologists suggest, there would be a decrease of frustration and hence of that aggression which finds its outlet in religion, socialism, or more violent forms of demand for social change. This doctrine is indeed an extremely plausible one, and provides an answer to the question of what the ' born ' reformer is to do when the ideal communist state, for instance, has been brought into being. Supposing that we have what we regard as an ideal state, how shall we ensure its continuance? Only, says Dr. Kyrle, by removing the sexual taboos which make the ' born ' reformer. Accordingly, Mr. Huxley shows us the state of affairs when the attack on post- and pre-marital, and pre-pubertal taboos has long succeeded. The erotic play of children is encouraged, universal sexual relations are the rule, and indeed any sign of the beginning

[1]R. M. Kyrle *A Psychologist's Utopia* (Psyche, 1931. Pp. 48).

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of a more deep and lasting affection is rebuked and stamped out, as being anti-social.

But Mr. Huxley, of course, sees so clearly what the psychologists do not see, that such a world must give up not only war, but also spiritual conflicts of any kind, not only superstition, but also religion, not only literary criticism but also great creative art of whatever kind, not only economic chaos, but also all the beauty of the old traditional things, not only the hard and ugly parts of ethics, but the tender and beautiful parts too. And it may well be that only biologists and philosophers will really appreciate the full force of Mr. Huxley's remarkable book. For of course in the world at large, those persons, and there will be many, who do not approve of his 'utopia,' will say, we can't believe all this, the biology is all wrong, it couldn't happen. Unfortunately, what gives the biologist a sardonic smile as he reads it, is the fact that *the biology is perfectly right,* and Mr. Huxley has included nothing in his book but what might be regarded as legitimate extrapolations from knowledge and power that we already have. Successful experiments are even now being made in the cultivation of embryos of small mammals in vitro, and one of the most horrible of Mr. Huxley's predictions, the production of numerous low-grade workers of precisely identical genetic constitution from one egg, is perfectly possible. Armadillos, parasitic insects, and even sea-urchins, if treated in the right way, do it now, and it is only a matter of time before it will be done with mammalian eggs. Many of us admit that as we walk along the street we dislike nine faces out of ten, but suppose that one of the nine were repeated sixty times. Of course, the inhabitants of Mr. Huxley's utopia were used to it.

And it is just the same in the philosophical realm. We see already among us the tendencies which only require reasonable extrapolation to lead to Brave New World. Publicism, represented in its academic form by Mr. Wittgenstein and Prof. Schlick, and in its more popular form by Prof. Hogben and Mr. Sewell, urges that the concept of reality must be replaced by the concept of communicability. Now it is only in science that perfect communicability is attainable, and in other words, all that we can profitably say is, in the last resort, scientific propositions clarified by mathematical logic. To the realm of the Unspeakable, therefore,

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belong Ethics, Religion, Art, Artistic Criticism, and many other things. This point of view has a certain attraction and possesses, or can be made to possess, considerable plausibility, but in the end it has the effect of driving out Reason from the private incommunicable worlds of non-scientific experience. We are left with science as the only substratum for Reason, but what is worse, Philosophy or Metaphysics too is relegated to the realm of the Unspeakable, so that Science, which began as a special form of Philosophy, and which only retains its intellectually beneficial character if it retains its status as a special form of Philosophy, becomes nothing more nor less than the Mythology accompanying a Technique. And what will happen to the world in consequence is seen with perfect clearness both by Mr. Aldous Huxley and by Mr. Bertrand Russell. ' The scientific society in its pure form ' says Mr. Russell ' is incompatible with the pursuit of truth, with love, with art, with spontaneous delight, with every ideal that men have hitherto cherished, save only possibly ascetic renunciation. It is not knowledge that is the source of these dangers. Knowledge is good and ignorance is evil; to this principle the lover of the world can admit no exception. Nor is it power in and for itself that is the source of danger. What is dangerous is power wielded for the sake of power, not power wielded for the sake of genuine good.'

Such considerations, of course, do not solve the problem, they only convince us that a problem exists. But Mr. Huxley's orchid-garden is itself an exemplification of the contention that knowledge is always good, for had it not been for his imaginative power, we should not have seen so clearly what lies at the far end of certain inviting paths. To his convincing searchlight, humanity (it is not too much to say) will always owe great debt, and it must be our part to get his book read by any of our friends who suppose that science alone can be the saviour of the world.

JOSEPH NEEDHAM.

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'BABBITT BUYS THE WORLD'

THE WORK, WEALTH AND HAPPINESS OF MANKIND. H. G. Wells (Heinemann. 10/6d.).

' Few people ' notes Mr. Wells on page 199, ' can be trusted to cut and arrange their own toe-nails well.' He is describing, with the detail that this extract suggests, the particular advance of civilization represented by the beautician's parlour. ' Museums are littered with the rouge cups, trays, manicure sets, mirrors and pots for greases and messes, of the pretty ladies of Sumeria, Egypt and Babylonia, and thence right down to our own times; but never can the organization of human adornment have reached the immensity and subtlety shown by these American figures.' No, there may be archness, but there is no irony in Mr. Wells's account of the up-to-date ritual. ' But, you will say, this is a very exceptional woman, and indeed this is a superfluous section to insert in a survey of world economics! ' Wrong! Before long, Mr. Wells implies, many more hundreds of millions a year will be spent on these things, and in a Utopia not very remote (if we will listen to Mr. Wells) *every* woman will enjoy the advantages of rouging, face-lifting, massage, pedicure, manicure, greases and messes even more scientific. This fairly represents the essential triviality of a large part of *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind.*

And yet Mr. Wells's directing idea—' the re-orientation of loyalties through a realisation of the essential unity of our species '—is not trivial. To this he has devoted his life with a noble disinterestedness. So I reminded myself when, having first thought of replying to the editors of *Scrutiny* that Mr. Wells is, at this date, not worth reviewing, I started on this his latest book. We may find it hard to like or respect him, but he is doing work that needs doing and that at the moment seems terribly urgent. Yet we must also remind ourselves that the more his kind of influence seems likely to prevail (and the process of civilization works with it) the more urgent is drastic criticism. If he belongs to the past it is only in the sense that it has long been impossible to discuss him seriously except as a case, a type, a portent. As such, he matters. More and more the disinterested power in the

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world seems likely to be Wellsian. Mr. J. M. Keynes hailed *The World of William Clissold* as a distinguished and important book. So the essential points are perhaps worth making once again.

Mr. Wells energizes tirelessly on behalf of a ' world-machine, planned and efficient, protecting and expanding human life. . . . ' And, if there is not a speedy approximation to such a machine the un-Wellsian preoccupations of some of us will, it is plain, soon cease to trouble us or the world. But once the machine is smoothly running, what then? What is this ' expanding,' this ' richer,' life, what are these infinite ' possibilities,' that Mr. Wells promises us, or rather, the species? Roger Bacon knew (according to Mr. Wells) that if men would listen to him, ' Vision and power would reward them. Steamship, aeroplane and automobile, he saw them all, and many other things.' Steamship, aeroplane and automobile, and many other things, have already rewarded us. Does ' expanding life ' mean more and more ' vision and power ' of this kind? Mr. Wells notoriously thinks it the duty of the civilized man to own or use the latest products of civilization, and I knew a French friend of his who thought this sense of duty vulgar. But it is plain that what Mr. Wells says of Edison might be adapted to himself: to him ' the delights offered by the luxury trades must have seemed extraordinarily stupid.' He has found fulfilment in his life's work. He can find his Utopia satisfactory because he has found his actual life satisfactory.

But there are some of us to whom the satisfactions of Edison and Mr. Wells, when offered as ultimate ends, seem insufficient. And Mr. Wells is not unaware of this perversity of human nature. He even devotes the twelfth, and last, volume of his ideal World Encyclopædia to ' beauty.' ' In it aesthetic criticism would pursue its wild, incalculable, unstandardized career, mystically distributing praise and blame. . . . The artist in his studio, the composer in his music room and all the multitude who invent and write down their inventions, have hardly figured in our world panorama, and even now we can give them but a passing sentence or two. They are an efflorescence, a lovely and purifying efflorescence on life.'—In this essay on the Happiness of Mankind, we can give them but a passing sentence or two. Mr. Wells, of course, believes that if we look after the machinery, they will look after themselves. But the perverse among us persist in urging that looking after the

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machinery should mean seeing that it works to desired ends, and that a world that gives no more attention to the 'lovely efflorescence' than Mr. Wells does is likely not to know what it desires; the efficiency of the machinery becomes the ultimate value, and this seems to us to mean something very different from expanding and richer human life.

Mr. Wells, however, is not interested in this kind of question. And it is for this reason that his book, for all its wealth of information, has a total effect of triviality: the energy that made it seem to the author worth writing is indistinguishable from a schoolboy immaturity of mind. Mr. Wells is praised for his interest in the world, but he is not interested enough. 'The story of New Zealand is particularly illuminating,' he notes. It is: I know someone who is enquiring why New Zealand has developed nothing in the nature of a distinctive literature. But Mr. Wells's notion of an educated man is one to whom such questions wouldn't be worth troubling about.

Yet inadvertently (he is not an athletic thinker) he admits their importance—and unwittingly passes judgment on himself. 'One peculiar value of the "Five Towns" novels of Mr. Arnold Bennett lies in the clear, convincing, intimate, and yet almost unpremeditated way in which he shows the industrialized peasant mentality of the employing class in a typical industrialized region, The Black Country, waking up to art and refinement, to ampler personality and new ideas'—The Wellsian man *will* wake up to 'art' and 'refinement' and 'ampler personality' and it will be in Mr. Arnold Bennett's way—a way that, we know, ended in the Imperial Palace Hotel. In spite of Edison's asceticism the inventor, the researcher, the man who gets things done, will seek his guerdon of the 'luxury trades.' And perhaps even Mr. Wells does not find his work and his Vision quite self-sufficing. Perhaps his interest in beauty-culture is significant. And it is perhaps permissible to suggest that specialized sexual charm counts for more in his scheme of things than a mature mind could think worthy; Mr. Wells will not blush.

But he might, perhaps, blush if one pointed out the falsities of his book in matters of fact. Take, for instance, his naïve account of beauticianry: he pays here, as the articles on the Beauty Racket published recently in the *New Republic* might

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bring home to him, involuntary tribute to the power of advertising that he acclaims elsewhere. Again, he has swallowed with completely uncritical innocence the official Ford legend. Let him read *The Tragedy of Henry Ford* by Jonathan Norton Leonard (G. P. Putnam's Sons, $3). This book is just out, but so much was already common knowledge that Mr. Wells cannot be acquitted of complicity—he was not an unwilling gull. This may seem a severe verdict. But read him on the ' ultra-scholastic education ' that the ' citizen ' gets from newspapers, radio, cinema, and so on (pp. 745ff.): ' On the whole, it is sound stuff he gets.' I know that Mr. Wells's criteria are not mine; but even by his own what he lets out elsewhere is enough to brand his complacency as something worse.

We can respect him as we cannot respect Arnold Bennett, but it is significant that, for all his disinterestedness, he is not safe from the Arnold Bennett corruption.

F. R. LEAVIS.

MANY PSYCHOLOGIES

PSYCHOLOGIES OF 1930. Edited by Carl Murchison (Clark University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 1930. Pp. xx-498. 36/-).

THE MIND AND ITS BODY. Charles Fox. (Kegan Paul. 1931. Pp. xii-316. 10/6).

THE NERVOUS TEMPERAMENT. Millais Culpin and May Smith (H.M. Stationery Office. 1930. Pp. iv-52. 1/-).

Psychologies of 1930 would, if it were generally read, help to correct two mistaken attitudes towards psychology. Sharp divisions of opinion on technical questions, endless difficulties in interpreting experimental results, age-old dilemmas of theory to be faced—all these are exhibited here, and ought to give check to the people who think cheerfully that it's only a matter of time before psychology has everything straightened out. It possibly is only a matter of time, but such a long time that none of us need feel

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cheerful about it. On the other hand those who regard ' psychologies ' as being nothing but undisciplined speculation by psychopathologists or extreme behaviourists will find such points of view as these put into perspective among definitely technical problems. Twenty-four well-known psychologists have contributed to the volume, most of them concerned with expounding and vindicating their own views. There is a preponderance of American writers, but the German and Russian workers are fairly well represented and the rest of Europe not overlooked. Apart from its value as a survey of contemporary psychological controversy, however, the book is worth possessing for several of the individual essays. G. S. Brett and John Dewey, for instance, have made distinguished contributions which are only semi-partisan in character and possess permanent value.

In *The Mind and Its Body* Mr. Fox vigorously makes hay of some of the untested assumptions that orthodox psychology harbours and allows to become fixed in popular opinion. He is aided by such recent work as Lashley's, which seems to upset most of the current working hypotheses about learning, without putting anything simple and definite in their place. It is his excellent summary of such work as this, and his indication of what it implies for psychological theory, which constitute the chief value of his book. His constructive work is much less convincing. For one thing the book is too brief for the amount of ground it covers, and Mr. Fox's vigorous and confident statement of his heterodox views on technical questions (for instance on instinct and fatigue) must for many people be seriously misleading. Had they been given the more detailed and laborious statement they needed we should have had several books instead of one, and none of them so stimulating as this.

The Nervous Temperament, a brief report from the Industrial Health Research Board, comes as a relief from ' psychologies.' It describes the diagnosis of psychoneurotic conditions among industrial workers and provides evidence of the extremely wide incidence of these troubles. In this report, as in all psychological work, the difficulty (completely ignored by popularisers) of getting simple tests and clear-cut statistical results is very apparent. Yet the work is convincing. The methods of diagnosis are noticeably sensible. The authors imply no theory of the ultimate causation of

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the neuroses, and they avoid the dangerous question of normality and the identification (too often implied by psychologists) of the abnormal with the subnormal. One need not commit oneself to belief in some hypothetical ' normality ' in order to agree that what they call ' symptoms ' are certainly undesirable. In short the work shows what can be done in psychology without dubious assumptions or presumptuous cultural implications.

The three books go to show how far psychology is from being a unified science, how inappropriate it is as a weapon for attacking philosophical views that you object to (it will be just as useful to your opponent), and how valuable some of its conceptions and methods may be as tools for dealing with specific problems.

D.W.H.

FELO DE SE?

WHAT WOULD BE THE CHARACTER OF A NEW WAR? An Enquiry of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (P. S. King, 16/- net).

THE DRAGON'S TEETH by Major-General J. F. C. Fuller (Constable, 10/- net).

THEY THAT TAKE THE SWORD by Esmé Wingfield-Stratford (Routledge, 12/6d. net).

THE UNSEEN ASSASSINS by Norman Angell (Hamish Hamilton, 7/6d. net).

We may as well be frank. The chances of our organising permanent peace before the next war comes are now practically *nil*. The Disarmament Conference will have disarmed nobody. Not one armed power that has sent a delegation, with the exception of Soviet Russia, has shown any serious desire to initiate disarmament on a general scale. The League of Nations, not through the inability of its officials but because of the dishonourable cowardice of the world's leading statesmen, has conspicuously failed to stop a war waged by one member state upon another, and there can no longer be any pretence that it affords the slightest

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protection to a state that is the victim of aggression. The movement that sprang from the suffering of the last war to establish peace has broken down. It is too easy to be cynical, and too useless: one can but inquire why this breakdown has occurred and find out whether anything not quite useless may yet be done.

First, we might as well be clear what War, if we are to have it, will now be like; and for this the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Enquiry is an invaluable piece of work. An expert here and there may disagree with a particular point some other expert has made, but the general picture drawn by these scientists and technical writers is one that (unless we refuse to look) we cannot but accept. The ratio of our destructive powers to the vulnerability of modern civilization has increased so rapidly that another war on the scale of the last one would loose powers big enough to smash the whole structure that has made civilized life as we know it possible in the west.

Many informed and sensitive people have realised the danger and have written suggesting ways of escape. But few of them have had anything adequate to say. Either, like General Fuller, they have possessed some interesting technical information but have failed to grasp the general problem in anything like a lucid way, or they have evaded that general problem by running off on some hobby horse of their own. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford and Mr. Norman Angell have at least avoided these dangers. The former has written the first book which this reviewer has seen which provides a serious historical philosophy to inform the movement for peace. It is not a work of 'propaganda' but a commentary on history by a free intelligence moved by great events. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford does not over-simplify: he shows War as a function of civil expansion in the past, and its interworkings, both positive and negative, with the progress civilisation has made. His analysis reveals the unreality of the historical fictions which are now the justifications of wars in the popular mind. Norman Angell's book is largely based on one useful conception: that what has changed the direction of human activities in a forward direction has often been, not the erudition of scholars nor the weight of institutions, but the discovery and acceptance by the people of some quite simple idea. Witchcraft trials ended, not because of books written about witchcraft nor because of pressure from above,

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but because for various reasons the whole idea came to seem cruel and absurd. The progress made in public health in the last century has been possible because the public has grasped the idea that disease can be spread by micro-organisms and has taken preventive action based on this idea. The new political idea that must be propagated is simply this: that it is foolish to expect world peace while there is world anarchy in the economic and political relations of the different states. As so often before, Norman Angell puts his case with such lucidity that one wonders that even statesmen should fail to see his point.

It is clear that a development in human society is possible only when there is both machinery to implement it and an acceptance of the psychological assumptions without which the machinery cannot work. At the moment we have for the organisation of peace certain machinery which, though inadequate, is in advance of the state of mind of those by whom it is to be used. The right thing to do is to attack ruthlessly the pre-peace assumptions (such as the inviolable sovereignty of nations) which still generally prevail, and to displace those statesmen (however well-meaning) whose actions and inactions are based upon assumptions that must lead to another world-war. There is no very great hope of success, yet surely only those can fail to make an effort who are untroubled by the ironical thought that Man may well be extinguished through lack of adaptability to an environment he has created for himself. H. L. ELVIN.

NEW BEARINGS IN ENGLISH POETRY by F. R. Leavis. (Chatto and Windus, Pp. 214. 6/-).

It is the distinction of this book that it consistently treats poetry as one of the major products of normal human activity, and the making of poetry as being at least as responsible an occupation as, say, scientific research. In fact the quality of the book may be indicated by saying that an intelligent scientist (if he were free from conventional preconceptions about literature) could read it without getting exasperated and without a sense of

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lacking initiation. It is only those for whom poetry is a cult with initiates, or an archaic pursuit surviving as a pastime, like archery, who will complain that the book is esoteric. They will be puzzled by the constant implication that a poet's ' magnificent qualities of intelligence and character ' are the concern of a critic of his poems. They will be irritated by the assertation that there are in the present age ' no serious standards current, no live tradition of poetry, and no public capable of informed and serious interest.'

As a consequence of his point of view much of Mr. Leavis's criticism of poetry becomes, in a certain limited sense, a criticism of the poet's personality. Not that he is a moralist or psychopathologist *manqué*. He sets out to confine himself ' as strictly as possible to literary criticism, and to remember that poetry is made of words.' Yet he makes it clear, for instance in condemning the bulk of Ezra Pound's poetry, that his only deep interest is in words that communicate valuable attitudes towards experience. ' The possible interest in verse form so distinguishable from interesting communication seems extremely limited.' He is constantly engaged in appraising the poet's state of mind, of which any one poem may be only a partial indication. He says of De la Mare's later poems, for example, ' the poignancy turns into a duller, heavier desolation. . . the unwholesomeness of the fantasy habit is, implicitly and explicitly, admitted. It is as if the disastrous consequences of drug addiction were being recognised. Life seems now not tragic but flat and empty.' He reminds himself, in discussing *Ash Wednesday*, that ' the sequence is poetry, and highly formal poetry.' But he proceeds: ' Yet it is impossible not to see in it a process of self-scrutiny, of self exploration. . . The poetry. . . is a striving after a spiritual state based upon a reality elusive and yet ultimate.' This concern with the spiritual state that poetry reflects involves no prying biography and no irrelevant probing for the poet's ' underlying experience.' He quotes T. S. Eliot's saying: ' the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates.' But he recognises that there must, nevertheless, be one individual who is responsible for the state of being out of which the poems have come. And this belief that the poet is morally accountable for what he writes lies behind the critical

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position that Mr. Leavis has taken up and consolidated in *New Bearings*.

No one is more aware than Mr. Leavis of the dangers of this critical approach, and of the necessity for remembering ' that poetry is made of words.' A discussion of many contemparary poems is bound to be, as he remarks of one, ' a delicate business, incurring danger both of crudity and impertinence.' But the danger only shows the need in the critic for fine insight and complete seriousness. And these qualities Mr. Leavis undoubtedly possesses.

Though *New Bearings* contains some excellent exegesis and detailed criticism of poems by T. S. Eliot, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Ezra Pound, Mr. Leavis's main concern with separate poems is to relate them to the rest of the poet's work; just as, in turn, the whole of the poet's work is related to the state of culture in which it was produced. His argument is, in brief, that poetry in the nineteenth century became established in a tradition of remoteness from other human activities, not merely from industrialism, but also from pursuits demanding fine intelligence, such as research and speculation in science. He then proceeds to an admirable summary of ' The Situation at the End of the War,' a chapter distinguished by extremely skilful compression and generalisation combined with scrupulous care for exceptions from the general statement. The study of W. B. Yeats is an outstanding example of this capacity for making comprehensive statement without distorting or neglecting any of the facts.

Having demonstrated the unsatisfactory state of poetry at the end of the war (and, implicitly, of most of it still) Mr. Leavis looks for a way out. He looks for an attitude to poetry that will allow it to become not merely the poet's comment on his life but an integral part of his life and growth. He looks too for a way of using language which will make this attitude effective. This use of poetry and this technique he finds in the work of three poets: in T. S. Eliot's poems pre-eminently, in Ezra Pound's *Mauberley*, and in Gerard Manley Hopkins' poems. These three poets he studies in detail, and fully establishes his claim that they are to be considered as giving, in their various ways, new bearings in English poetry.

Mr. Leavis ends his book with a brief examination of the

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work of two young poets—W. Empson and Ronald Bottrall—whom he regards as being in the tradition of poetry re-opened and extended by T. S. Eliot. Bottrall's work he classes confidently with Eliot's *Waste Land*, finding not merely similarities of outlook, but also (what is more important for the validity of the comparison) significant differences and originality in Bottrall's poems. Here one may feel inclined to question his conviction. It is difficult to believe that Bottrall's extra buoyancy and ' positive energy ' were not well within Eliot's spiritual compass, but that Eliot saw their limitations and so had to make a less direct approach to assurance. It may be, as Mr. Leavis suggests, a representative difference between the generations; but it seems possible that it is a difference between greater insight and less. The question can be answered only by Bottrall's future work.

It testifies to the healthiness of Mr. Leavis's critical standpoint that one can question his detailed opinions and yet wholeheartedly accept his main contentions. It means that he has brought to his task not merely keen sensitivity and personal taste, but sufficient intelligence and power of generalisation to approach a genuine discipline of criticism.

D. W. HARDING.

THE LONDON BOOK OF ENGLISH PROSE, Selected and Ordered by Herbert Read and Bonamy Dobrée (Eyre and Spottiswood, 7/6d.).

The London Book of English Prose marks the end of the purple patch anthology. This is significant, for the type of mind which rejoices in the more highly coloured passages of prose is the type which seeks in poetry merely a particular kind of emotional stimulus, which is satisfied with the immediate thrill, and is uncritical of the way in which the effect is produced. Its possessors are the last adherents of the magical attitude towards words, and their criticism resembles incantation rather than reasoned statement. Fortunately Messrs. Herbert Read and Bonamy Dobrée are free from this kind of romanticism; for them prose is an instrument which may serve the humblest as well as

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the most exalted purposes, and their aim is ' to provide material for investigating how far the instrument differs according to the use to which it is put.' The result is that *The London Book* is one of which the intelligent reader can make good use, not perhaps, as the editors suggest, as ' an instruction in the art of writing good prose,' but as a means of increasing his power as a reader, as a storehouse of material which can be used for testing and discriminating between the different responses to many kinds of prose.

On the other hand, no scheme of classification such as is attempted here can be entirely satisfactory. ' *Le style, c'est de sentir, de voir, de penser, et rien de plus,*' and as there are as many ways of feeling, seeing and thinking as there are authors and moods, each passage is in a sense unique, and the attempt to herd over three hundred examples into twenty-one categories is bound to be unsuccessful. The editors admit that their grouping has perforce been somewhat arbitrary, since ' few examples can be found which are single in their aim ' (though they curiously suggest that ' the best specimens are those in which the motives are least mixed,' which is not true unless one adopts a very naïve definition of ' motive '). Nevertheless it is possible to devise categories based on the different ways in which the mind works which would better serve the editors' declared purpose. Consider, for example, the difference in tone and intention between the extracts from Defoe, Swift and Conrad (all from the sub-section ' Story Telling '); the contrasted attitudes to their subjects of Gilbert White and Cobbett (' Autobiography and Journals '); the difference in poise between Dorothy Osborne and Pope (' Letters '), and it is immediately apparent that the psychological foundations are not properly laid. ' History,' ' Letters,' ' Politics,' ' Drama,' etc., are categories imposed from without, not necessarily corresponding to different tones, intentions and modes of feeling within the individual passages, and not necessarily implying any important similarity between the various exhibits collected under the single head. Psychology as well as sensibility is necessary for anyone who undertakes to edit an anthology.

L. C. KNIGHTS.

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PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCIENCES by F. R. Tennant (Cambridge, 6/-).

Dr. Tennant is one of those philosophers who are engaged in discovering how many of our beliefs can possibly be doubted, and how far the doubtful ones can be eliminated without leaving our experience entirely meaningless. In the present work he brings the weapons of analytic and genetic psychology to lean on the task of discrediting as many of these beliefs as he considers dispensable. The only fundamental principle which he does not permit himself to doubt, and which he therefore refrains from examining by his method, is that any belief which enables us to make verifiable predictions gives us some sort of knowledge—possibly imperfect—about reality. All others, after a rather summary trial, are found wanting and rejected. The author points out that this is the criterion of truth actually employed by the sciences, and discusses the use made of it in various branches of so-called knowledge. History and natural theology, which accept it, are ranked by him as sciences, but dogmatic theology, which does not, is dismissed.

The book contains some penetrating criticisms both of rationalist philosophies and of the more extravagant speculations of modern mathematical physicists. There is little doubt that Dr. Tennant overrates the importance of genetic psychology as an instrument of philosophy, but his book can be recommended nevertheless as a lucid and readable exposition of a method of approach which is becoming increasingly fashionable nowadays, and is undoubtedly yielding some valuable results.

J. L. RUSSELL.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

We have found it necessary to hold some of the reviews intended for the first number until the second, in which it is hoped our full reviewing policy will be apparent. Mention of a book under this head does not preclude a full review later.

MEMOIRS OF OTHER FRONTS: An Anonymous Novel. (Putnam, 7/6d.).

VARIETY OF WAYS, by Bonamy Dobrée. Oxford (Humphrey Milford, 5/-).

BYRON AND THE NEED OF FATALITY, by Charles du Bos, translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne (Putnam, 10/6d.).

THE CRISIS AND THE CONSTITUTION: 1931 AND AFTER, by Harold J. Laski (Hogarth Press, 1/6d.).

McTAGGART: A Memoir by G. Lowes Dickinson (Cambridge University Press, 6/-).

PLATO AND HIS DIALOGUES, by G. Lowes Dickinson (Allen and Unwin, 6/-).

CHAUCER, by G. K. Chesterton (Faber and Faber, 12/6d.).

SCEPTICISM AND CONSTRUCTION: BRADLEY'S SCEPTICAL PRINCIPLE AS THE BASIS OF CONSTRUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY, by Charles A. Campbell (Allen and Unwin, 12/6d.).

THE THEORY OF LEGISLATION, by Jeremy Bentham, edited with introduction and notes by C. K. Ogden (Kegan Paul, 15/-).

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF APES AND MONKEYS, by S. Zuckerman (Kegan Paul, 15/-).

DEVIL'S TOR, a novel by David Lindsay (Putnam, 7/6d.).

DEVIL TAKE THE HINDMOST: A YEAR OF THE SLUMP, by Edmund Wilson (Scribner's, 10/6d.).

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

M. C. BRADBROOK is at present working on Elizabethan dramatic conventions. She has recently published an essay on *Elizabethan Stage Conditions : A Study of their place in the Interpretation of Shakespeare's Plays.*

RONALD BOTTRALL is the author of *The Loosening, and Other Poems,* published at Cambridge by the Minority Press.

' MARTIN CRUSOE ' is a house master at a well known public school.

G. LOWES DICKINSON'S most recent books are *McTaggart : A Memoir* and *Plato and His Dialogues.*

H. L. ELVIN is a fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

D. W. HARDING is researching on rhythm at the British Institute of Industrial Psychology.

WILLIAM HUNTER published an essay on T. F. Powys with the Minority Press. He is at present writing a book on the cinema.

L. C. KNIGHTS is researching on the background of comedy in the Jacobean period.

F. R. LEAVIS is the author of *New Bearings in English Poetry,* and *Mass Civilization and Minority Culture.*

Q. D. LEAVIS has recently published *Fiction and the Reading Public.*

JOSEPH NEEDHAM is, of course, *The Sceptical Biologist.* His latest book is *The Great Amphibium.*

C. H. PEACOCK is an undergraduate at Cambridge.

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